A Chink in Nader's Armor? *Leah Young*

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Politics and the Arts – September 2, 1972, 50 cents

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Mr. Nixon's Beach Party

John Osborne

The Jewish Vote – *Paul R. Wieck*

Seeds of Port Huron – *Tom Geoghegan*

Downhill with TV – *Crawford Woods*

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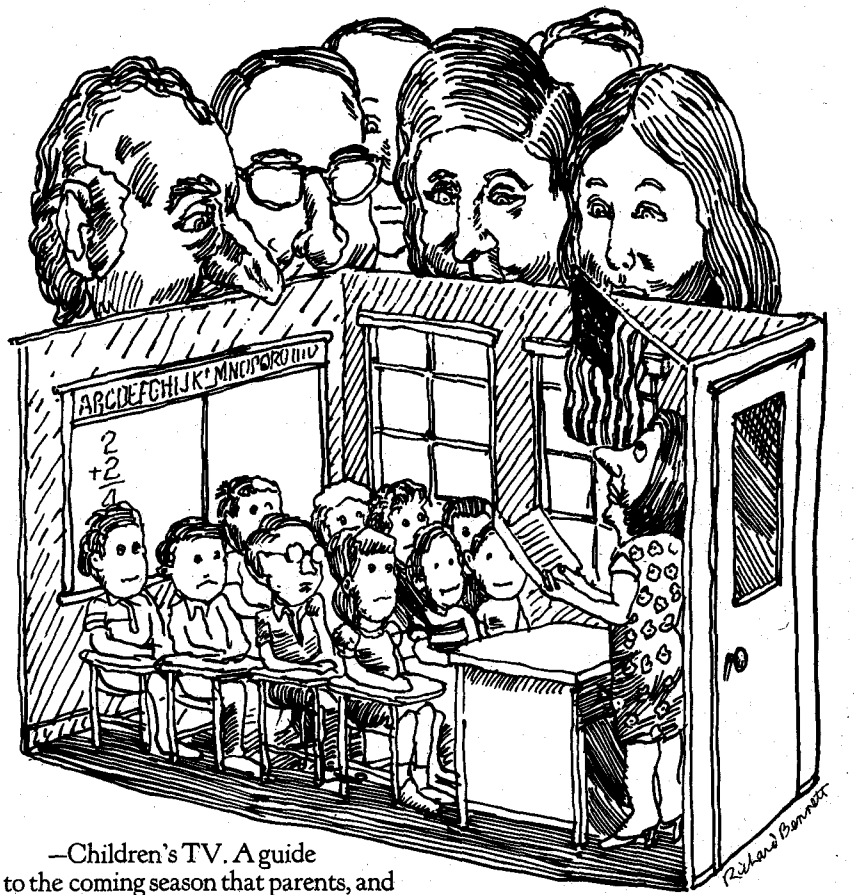

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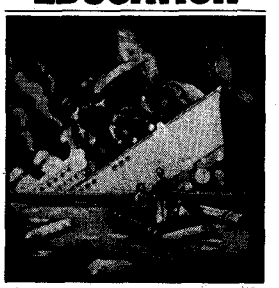

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TRB

from Miami Beach
September 2, 1972

Fantasyland

At the driveway of the swank Doral Hotel I am stopped by two troopers and a Burns security guard in a red coat. "Credentials?" they demand. "But why?" I asked nonplussed, "Isn't this a public hotel, the McGovern headquarters last month?" They are polite. They explain that as temporary presidential campaign headquarters for Republicans it is under security. I show my press cards and get as far as the steps. "Credentials?" asks another Burns man.

To get to the men's room would take an armored car.

All 220 rooms have been taken by the GOP for a week. It is a fortress. An interoffice memo distributed to staff says, "While at the hotel you are requested to put all sensitive papers in the 'confidential burn' bags found in every office. . . . A paper shredder is available in the security office." And to avoid embarrassment, it says, take your credentials to the pool.

It gives you the creeps. What kind of a world is this? You remember the Watergate bugging. The fact is, you soon discover, Republicans are so opulent this year that money runs out of their ears; hiring hotels is nothing. A newsman senses it at once. At the convention press room there is an ostentatious display of mimeographed handouts; one pile a foot high is of announcements to a press conference held two days earlier but not removed. There are tables and tables covered with assorted handouts of which few say anything.

It is easy to ridicule the Nixon coronation and probably nothing so elaborate has occurred since the Victoria Jubilee. But some of the attacks are unfair since custom requires the ritual even if there is no contest. Nevertheless, this is surely the dullest convention I ever attended, not even excluding Hoover's renomination in 1932 which, at least, had a certain tragic drama.

Never was so much written by so many about so little. On the other hand, the convention served its two main purposes, to adorn Mr. Nixon (who is a hard man to love) and to put horns on George McGovern (who is likeable enough, but whose plight after a series of agonizing blunders is near-desperate). The 1972 GOP convention has deep interest for the student. This is the mechanism by which the "haves" keep their comfortable hold on things and as such deserves intense study.

It is done, I think, with colored balloons and Nixon pompom girls. They distract the eye while the basic things are forgotten. Read the platform. You won't find that 25 million Americans live below the poverty line, or that five percent of the people get 40 percent of the income, or that a few hundred corporations now control 55 percent of all corporate assets, or that blacks are being compressed tighter and tighter into crime-breeding central cities, while safety valves like school busing are being sanctimoniously shut. These things are all true but are hardly mentioned. You become absorbed by the process in which such issues are adroitly ignored.

You may not love, or even like, Mr. Nixon, but you have to respect his power. Here is the Vietnam war, for example, which Congress dislikes and the people detest but which nevertheless goes on as we continue dropping bombs on dark-skinned people of one of the world's smallest and poorest countries. We keep dropping bombs because Mr. Nixon wants us to and because he says it is a test of national stamina and tells us in his acceptance speech, "We will not stain the honor of the United States." Cheers, tumult. We must murder or our honor is stained.

Pompoms and Circumstance

You discover by degrees that you are on a gigantic television lot and participating in a superbly staged show. Everybody is type-cast, reporters as reporters, politicians as politicians, all those enthusiastic young people as enthusiastic young people. Three thousand of the latter have been brought in and lodged around a high school near convention hall in what is called a compound. They are ardent, sincere, dedicated. They have a fixed place in the gallery to stamp, shout, squeal and rhythmically chant when cued from the podium. When Mr. Nixon arrives at the airport a platoon or two of this mobile TV claque is detached from the crowd and is waiting for him. The President tells them how much he likes young people.

Miami Beach is a nice make-believe tinker-toy city of white stucco with pastel green trim, as artificial as the GOP convention script. A copy of this remarkable document is distributed mistakenly to some of the press and gives a minute-by-minute scenario of events hours before they occur. Actor John Wayne is instructed to "accept cheers and applause," and "spontaneous demonstrations" are timed in advance precisely. The Reverend Philip Hansen, a member of the team of divines whose supplications begin each session, says he had to submit his prayer two weeks in advance.

You can't really be angry. Make-believe is fun. When the roll call vote for the unopposed Nixon on the big screen reaches "Missouri" and he has a majority, the screen flashes "Nixon Nominated," "Nixon Nominated" in palpitating excitement.

For me the highlight comes when the reluctant chairman of the New Mexico delegation has to record the one anti-Nixon vote for Rep. Pete McCloskey. The chairman acts as though he were carrying some obscene thing in tongs to a flush toilet.

The conservatives at Miami Beach are in control from the start. They smell a landslide and have picked Spiro as heir apparent. The President is a little harder to make out. He considers McGovern an easy mark and can't wait to chew him up. Then . . . back to four more years of Vietnam bombing, perhaps, and who knows what after that. More and more he sounds like De Gaulle. "When the history of this period is written," he says majestically in his acceptance speech, "it will be recorded that our most significant contributions to peace resulted from our trips to Peking and to Moscow." The regal use of "our" is a little odd. A bit later he adjures the nation, "Let us not turn away from greatness." The pompom girls love it.

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Living Up To SALT

From the high hopes of Moscow—when it appeared that the United States and the Soviet Union might finally be turning away from the arms race—we have seen nothing but backsliding on this side of the ocean. In June Mr. Nixon reported to Congress that he had taken "the first step toward a new era of mutual agreed restraint in arms limitation," and four days later Secretary Laird took to Congress his new package of accelerated strategic weapons programs. Debate on SALT I raged on throughout the summer, Congress okayed Trident and the B-1 bomber, and now finishing the slide we have Senator Jackson's amendment to the interim agreement on offensive weapons (supported by the White House), and the revelation that the Pentagon wants new warheads which would give the US a first-strike capability against Soviet land-based missiles.

The Jackson amendment contains two important propositions, the first of which is that ". . . the Congress recognizes the principle of United States-Soviet Union equality reflected in the antiballistic missile treaty, and urges and requests the President to seek a future treaty that, *inter alia*, would not limit the United States to levels of intercontinental strategic forces inferior to the limits provided for the Soviet Union. . . ." Senate debate has clearly defined this to mean that in any SALT II agreements on offensive weapons the number of missiles allowed each side would have to be equal. The second proposition states that ". . . the Congress considers that the success of these agreements and the attainment of more permanent and comprehensive agreements are dependent upon the maintenance of a vigorous research and development and modernization program leading to a prudent strategic posture."

The interim agreement signed in Moscow limits both countries to their present numbers of land-based ICBMs—1054 for the US against an estimated 1618 for the Soviets—and puts a ceiling on numbers of ballistic missile submarines and submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs): 44 boats and 710 SLBMs for the US; 62 boats and 950 SLBMs for the Soviet Union. Although the Soviets are permitted an advantage in numbers of missiles, their nuclear forces are no match for those of the US because the agreement does not limit the number of warheads each missile carries. The US, through its programs to put multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles

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(MIRVs) on its Minuteman III ICBMs and Poseidon SLBMs, has achieved a two-to-one advantage in missile-warheads that will mushroom to a four-to-one edge by 1977 unless the Soviet Union can develop and deploy MIRVs before then.

So far the Soviets have not tested any MIRVs. Secretary Laird now says they will start testing in six to nine months, but he has a history of premature warnings about Soviet MIRVs. After testing it would take them two years to deploy any MIRVs, and several more for full deployment.

Jackson's demand for equal numbers of missiles in SALT II is based on the assumption that the Soviets will by 1977, when the interim agreement runs out, have MIRVed completely and outnumbered the US in warheads. The scenario then feared is this: the Russians knock out our land-based ICBMs and strategic bombers with a first strike, leaving us only our submarines to retaliate with against their cities. The President then faces a choice of firing on their cities and watching US cities destroyed in turn or surrendering. The supposed methods of avoiding this hypothetical situation are 1) developing the capability to retaliate against Soviet missiles, which the President has been hinting he favors and the Pentagon has been clamoring for, or 2) urging on the Soviets an arms limitation agreement under which they would have no second-strike force left once they had knocked out our missiles and bombers. The latter is what Jackson says he hopes to ensure by calling for numerical equality.

The whole scenario should be suspect. Is it even remotely possible that the USSR would attack the US knowing it risked having its population decimated? And if one or both sides do develop silo-destroying capacity is it likely that either side will agree to the massive reductions needed to bring them down to a level at which they *will not* have enough left for a second wave? History shows that neither side has ever been willing to scrap something they've already developed. Finally, how do we know the Russians intend to develop a first-strike capability against our missile silos? Neither side has this capacity yet, and to achieve it the Russians would have to develop a MIRV system more sophisticated than ours, which would take them longer than three years. And no one seems to remember that their arms buildups in the past have consistently been *in response* to ours (their MIRVing would follow ours by about five years).

At this point the significance of the Pentagon request for $20 million to develop a second generation MIRV system with silo-destroying capacity becomes clear: we are already prodding the Russians to do just what Jackson fears. The administration has defended this program as needed to give it the flexibility to respond to a Soviet attack on our missiles by retaliating against their remaining missiles rather than cities, hoping to stave off the destruction of our own cities. Beyond the implausibility of expecting anyone to exercise such restraint in nuclear war, the danger of the program is that the Russians have no choice but to view it as an attempt on our part to acquire a first-strike capability against their land-based missiles. It would likely convince them that we are not to be trusted, despite our SALT disavowal of any "efforts to obtain unilateral advantage" and pledge that "follow-on negotiations to SALT should be to constrain and reduce on a long-term basis threats to the survivability of our respective retaliatory forces." Nothing would contribute more to a Soviet conclusion that they should push for first-strike capabilities before signing any further agreements, just as our development of MIRVs most likely ensured that they will MIRV their own missiles before agreeing to a halt. Our double standard in the arms race could not be clearer. Senator Cranston put it this way in Senate debate: the "assessment by Secretary Laird was that an aggressive program beyond modernization to deploy silo-killing warheads which threaten the survivability of our Minuteman force would be considered a Soviet violation of the agreement. I wonder if the Senator from Washington has the same feeling in reverse about the news of our own newly proposed silo-killing warhead program. Could not the Soviet Union consider that to be a violation on our side, at least potentially, of the agreements?"

Luckily, the Senate-House conference committee on the weapons authorization bill withheld funds for the program. But the Pentagon's aims are now clear, and the Soviets (much less the American people) have no way of knowing whether research will continue and funds be requested again next year. In this situation it is imperative that the President fully explain the rationale for the warhead program and any future development plans.

In this context of accelerating nuclear weapons programs, Senate passage of the Jackson amendment could mean several things. First, the "vigorous research and development" clause would further convince the Soviets of our intentions to accelerate the arms race. Second, US negotiators at SALT II would be locked into the demand for equal numbers of missiles, since the treaty would have to get two-thirds approval from the Senate. These two factors would encourage a Soviet push to make up their three-to-five year lag in technology, for without equivalent technology they would be foolish to agree to equal numbers. The only alternative for an early SALT II agreement based on real equality would be a US cutback to Soviet levels of technology. And with Laird continuing to proclaim that we must always "maintain a technologically superior position," that seems unlikely.

A third clear result would be the blank check given the Pentagon by the research and development clause. Senator Cranston has expressed the fear that "A Tonkin Gulf resolution in the nuclear arms field may well

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lie within the Jackson reservation. . . . What may follow could be a request for massive new funding for weapons projects and a continuation of the dangerous upward spiral. I think the administration would then be able to come back to Congress and say, 'We are only doing what you told us to do.' "

Finally, whether passed or not, the Jackson amendment has succeeded in losing the word "sufficiency" in the shuffle. The argument is now between "real equality," taking into account technology, numbers of warheads, weapons located in forward bases (Europe), and geographical asymmetries, and "numerical equality." But when both the US and the USSR each has a secure retaliatory force that can devastate the other—which is the situation today and will remain so under SALT I—it makes no difference whether one country has a hundred more ICBMs or several hundred more warheads. Present overkill levels are sufficient. But thanks to Senator Jackson's crusade no politician can now risk being against "equality" defined in one way or another.

The Jackson people are confident that they will have the votes when the Senate reconvenes after Labor Day, and they may well be right. They claim 30 cosponsors so far, and point out that during the jockeying that went on before the recess for the Republican convention Senator Fulbright and his allies, fearing a loss, were unwilling to let Jackson set a time for the vote so he could bring his Republican backers home from Miami. If the amendment passes, the Foreign Relations conferees will probably delete it from the final resolution (since it is not in the House version and the Senate committee is against it), but Jackson doesn't mind that. The sense of the Senate would remain clear.

Senators Brooke and Hughes have an amendment up that might take some of the sting out of Jackson's: it would express Senate opinion that the success of SALT I and future agreements depends upon each side's refusal to develop first-strike capability against missile silos. Probably nothing will stop the Soviets from MIRVing, but if we are to stop short of the next major step—first-strike capabilities—and if the US is ever going to reconsider its 25-year obsession with leading the arms race, the Jackson amendment ought to be defeated and the Brooke-Hughes amendment passed.

Reckless Spending

Trying to hide the shambles of his own budget, the President last month piously vetoed a $1.8 billion increase in HEW-Labor appropriations. To him it was "the perfect example of the kind of reckless federal spending that cannot be done without more taxes or more inflation." You would hardly guess that the same man who said this plans for fiscal year 1972 a stunning $30 billion deficit, or that the Nixon administration is in any way responsible for accumulating 25 percent of the national debt and a current inflation rate of 4.8 percent. The Nixon economic game plan, rather than calling for new taxes or dipping into an $82 billion military budget, just keeps flailing away at penny ante welfare.

This is the third veto of HEW appropriations in four years from an administration that claims it is "second to none in its concern for America's health, education and manpower needs." Most of the increase the Congress provided for in the vetoed bill would simply have gone to restore cuts in last year's budget or keep pace with inflation. Such "increases" included $400 million previously cut from hospital construction, medical schools and health research. Except for cancer research, the budget of the National Institutes of Health was to be considerably lower than last year's.

The veto keeps school aid down to $1.58 billion for those districts where educationally deprived children depend on Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Many of these school districts, which have lost $200 million, will either have to reduce salaries and staffs or make up the loss from a dwindling local tax base. "The greater burden upon state and local governments," Representative William Ford (D, Mich.) told the House, "tends to negate any anti-inflationary effects of these cuts." Money for drug abuse education or psychiatric research for troubled Vietnam veterans has dried up.

Most of these increases were hardly inflationary in the first place. Since most of the programs covered a three-year period, perhaps only a third of the $1.8 billion would have been expenditures affecting this year's deficit. Even if one includes the whole $1.8 billion in this fiscal year, Congress has still kept overall appropriations well under the administration's original budget requests. "Over the past 20 years," Senator Mansfield notes, "no Congress has appropriated more money for expenditures than Presidents have asked for." Last June the House Ways and Means Committee issued a table that shows the Nixon administration has requested only $4.9 billion out of the $12.5 billion Congress had authorized for HEW programs.

You don't need to think of the billions being poured into the Trident and the B-1 to be angered about this theft from schoolchildren and sick people. But it is annoying to think of the $980 million lately earmarked for a new generation of submarines—whose price, at $1.3 billion a sub, may one day exceed $40 billion—while another $2 billion goes this year to modernize the already adequate Polaris and Poseidon fleets. Just weeks before the veto the administration let a $2.6 billion contract for a space shuttle and tried to push a $200 million ABM site for the capital. The only casualties in the war on inflation are still civilian.

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Poor General Motors

Pity the car makers, caught this year between their enormous profits and an ambitious President who wants to show the country that he really can stop inflation. This is the season when Detroit readies for its autumn offensive; General Motors, Ford, Chrysler and American Motors usually announce their new models in late summer, and by September we see the prices for the coming year. There are the inevitable changes—smaller fins, wider bodies, faster backs—but the new cars are predictable in one respect: they always carry "improvements" that make them a little more expensive than last year. By this process the price of the average GM car went up $80 in 1970, $200 in 1971 and $140 in 1972. Last year's increases were delayed three months by the President's price freeze, but by December they had been approved by the price commission with a few restrictions. Then in January, GM, Ford and American came back for a second, smaller price boost, this time to pay for "options made standard."

Nixonomics have not been harsh on Detroit. During the first half of this year, GM and Ford earned the largest profits on record for the period: $1.344 billion for GM and $535 million for Ford—all in six months. Though they haven't done as well, Chrysler and American have also been successful. The boom was inspired by President Nixon's decision to cancel the seven percent excise tax on domestic cars. This reduced the average car price by approximately $200, which in turn stimulated the market and drove profits for the big car makers 20 percent above last year's take.

Chrysler tendered the first bid to the price commission on July 5, a proposed average increase of $91 per car, all of which it attributed to the cost of meeting new federal safety standards. Two days later GM followed with a proposed increase of $85 for safety improvements and $5 for styling changes. Ford said it would charge $91 more (all for safety), and American asked for an increase of about $81 for safety and $68 for other improvements. All of these seem to fall within the range of permissible increases set by the commission.

GM's calculations show that at current sales rates, the company would have to increase the price per car by $200 in order to pay for all the changes required this year by the government—stronger bumpers, new pollution filters, fire resistant fabrics and improvements in factory conditions. GM felt modest in asking merely for an increase of $90 a car (which incidentally would increase the company's total annual income by about half a billion dollars). Aware that even well-justified price increases are conspicuous these days, the director of the Cost of Living Council, Donald Rumsfeld, invited the Detroit executives to come have a chat at the White House on August 14. He couldn't persuade them to eliminate price increases altogether, but by the end of the week GM and Ford had backed down by a third, cutting the average increase to $59 a car. Chrysler and American, smaller and more vulnerable to competitive price cutting, have decided not to step down.

Earlier this summer Ralph Nader filed suit to make the price commission hold public hearings on these requests. Perhaps realizing that the administration could benefit by this too, the commission agreed and set the hearings to begin on September 12. Rumsfeld told the press that a final decision on auto prices will not be reached until all testimony has been heard, certainly no sooner than mid-October, one month after the 1973 models come out. If all goes well, the new price tags won't appear until later, perhaps after the election. The industry isn't showing much concern; in reducing its request by $31, for example, GM pointed out that it would defer prior increases for "GM initiated improvements" just as it did last year. That means that GM will come back in a few months to ask the commission to grant what remains of its original request. And if last year's pattern is followed, GM will get what it wants.

Second Choice

Governor George Wallace was back home in Alabama playing General Sherman to overtures from the American Independent Party to carry its standard in 1972 as he had in 1968. Meeting in Louisville, Kentucky, the party's convention abandoned a move to draft Wallace after the governor telephoned to say he would not accept one. The convention then turned to Republican Congressman John G. Schmitz of California and on August 4 nominated him to be its presidential candidate. The next day it chose Thomas J. Anderson of Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, the publisher of a small farm magazine, to be his vice-presidential running-mate. Both are members of the far-right John Birch Society. Schmitz is a Catholic; Anderson a Protestant. So it is a balanced ticket.

Schmitz, who represents President Nixon's San Clemente district in the House, was defeated for renomination in the Republican primary in June. He laid the blame for his defeat at the door of the district's most prestigious resident. "I got defeated for not walking in lock step when he changed," said Schmitz. Rejected by his California constituents, the AIP presidential candidacy is not likely to save Schmitz from political oblivion. His departure from Washington will leave the Birchers with only one card-carrying member in the Congress—California's John Rousselot—although we suspect there are still more than a handful in the closet. Capitol Hill will survive the loss. After all, as one Washington wag put it: when you're out of Schmitz, you're out of boor.

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A Chink in Nader's Armor?

Three liberal, usually pro-consumer, Democrats killed no-fault automobile insurance in the Senate last month, and some disgruntled staff aides are blaming Ralph Nader for the death. The senators, Thomas Eagleton (D, Mo.), Frank Church (D, Idaho) and Joseph Montoya (D, NM), all stressed that bringing no-fault to the floor for a vote would be an exercise in futility since the House would not act on legislation this year, even if the Senate did. So they joined southern states rights Democrats and Republicans supporting the President and voted to refer no-fault insurance to the Judiciary Committee for study and thus kill the bill.

Three weeks before the Senate vote, House Commerce Committee Chairman Harley O. Staggers (D, W. Va.) told Nader he would see to it that no-fault auto insurance was voted out of his committee. And, Nader passed this information on to staff members of the Senate Commerce Committee who were busy rounding up votes. He made no effort, however, to talk to anyone himself, even though no-fault insurance—insurance in which a subscriber's own insurance company pays for injuries regardless of which driver is at fault for an accident—is considered one of the most important consumer issues to have come up in Congress in years.

Why has Nader, the consumer advocate with seeming interest in every consumer issue, ducked no-fault? The usually accessible Nader refuses to talk to reporters on the subject, won't return phone calls, and has instructed Lowell Dodge, his associate in charge of the Center for Auto Safety, not to speak for him on the issue. When this reporter requested a written statement from Nader (in lieu of an interview since he refused to return a phone call), his key aide at the Center for Responsive Law, Ted Jacobs, said Nader did not like "being blackmailed" into making a statement just to avoid being accused of ducking the issue. Jacobs then proceeded to read me what Nader had said criticizing the Senate Commerce Committee's bill for not going far enough: "There should be much higher benefits," he said. Oddly enough, Nader never told the committee that, and in fact when he testified on another matter he was asked his views and said he had not made up his mind.

Proponents of no-fault point to a Department of Transportation (DOT) study that shows that the present "tort" system returns only about 44 cents in benefits to consumers for each dollar paid in premiums to insurance companies. The Senate no-fault bill would have paid accident victims for basic economic loss, including medical and rehabilitative expenses and wage loss up to a maximum of $125,000 while still allowing lawsuits for pain and suffering in severe injury cases.

There are three main reasons why no-fault has earned the enmity of most state insurance officials, many insurance companies and the American Trial Lawyers: 1) A federal bill creates a major national presence in insurance matters which Congress has heretofore relegated to the states. 2) It severely restricts the right to sue. While no-fault advocates say that the right to sue for intangible losses due to someone else's negligence is restricted, not eliminated, others fear that it is an opening wedge against the citizen's unrestricted right to sue those who harm him—a right being developed by public interest law groups in areas of product liability and the environment. 3) The Senate antitrust and monopoly subcommittee calculated that for the year 1969 parties to auto accident litigation ultimately will pay legal fees totalling $1.1 billion, or about one-fourth of the total income of the legal profession that year.

The American Trial Lawyers Association has been fighting no-fault both in Congress and in state legislatures, where the administration says it favors its enactment. Even though the administration argued forcefully against *federal* no-fault legislation in the Senate, Nixon's consumer adviser, Virginia Knauer, and others have been lambasting the Trial Lawyers for their lobbying against no-fault in the *state* legislatures. The Trial Lawyers are accused of gutting real reform in six states that have enacted inadequate legislation and of killing no-fault outright in such major insurance states as New York and Pennsylvania.

So why is Nader ducking the no-fault issue?

On July 27 the American Trial Lawyers Association voted to donate $10,000 to Nader's auto safety work. They also pledged themselves to raise an additional $10,000 from their membership to finance an index of automobile defects. Two years ago Nader suggested to the Trial Lawyers that they donate one percent of their receipts to public interest law firms. Although his suggestion has not yet been acted upon, the Trial Lawyers' newly elected president J. D. Lee says he hopes to meet with Nader this year to discuss with him ways that lawyers can devote more time to public law work.

Mr. Lee bridles at any thought that Nader is remaining neutral on no-fault because of his warm relations with the Trial Lawyers. He says it is easy to see why Nader did not endorse the Senate bill. "It's not in the consumer's interest. It is a big man's, big business bill that would allow the $52 billion casualty insurance industry to run over the consumer."

Another consumer advocate who has championed no-fault and discussed it with Nader says Nader is ignoring the issue because he is "afraid that if lawyers are wiped out they won't be around for other things."

Leah Young

MRS. YOUNG *is a reporter for* The Journal of Commerce.

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Getting Worse

The Pentagon's Cost Overruns

by Peter J. Ognibene

It seems absolutely clear to me that we reduce and even endanger our national security by developing and procuring costly and ineffective weapon systems. If the weapons we develop are so costly that we cannot afford enough of them and if they are so technically complex that they are unreliable and difficult to maintain, we have done the nation a disservice by developing and procuring them. We have done a particular disservice to those American soldiers who will die in combat because we have given them a weapon that is superior only in theory to that of the enemy.

Senator John Stennis (D, Miss.) at the opening of hearings on the "weapons acquisition process," December 3, 1971.

The statistics to back up the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee were made public last month when the General Accounting Office released its report, "Acquisition of Major Weapon Systems." It soon came to be called the cost overrun report.

"The estimated cost of 77 weapon systems has increased by about $28.7 billion (31 percent)," the report said. That was the difference between the original and revised estimates at the end of fiscal year 1971 (June 30, 1971). There were 141 weapon systems then under development which were expected to cost $162 billion by the time they were completed although some $93 billion of that amount had yet to be appropriated by Congress. The unmistakable implication of the GAO report is that we can expect that $93 billion to overrun to a much higher figure. How much higher one cannot predict, but on August 3 Senator William Proxmire (D, Wisc.), the chairman of the Joint Economic Committee, revealed that Pentagon cost overruns had gotten worse: "The cost of 45 selected major weapons systems have increased by $36.5 billion over the original planning estimates for those weapons." Proxmire's figures were based upon data compiled by the Defense Department as of March 31, 1972. "The situation seems to me," Proxmire said, "to be growing worse instead of improving."

The Pentagon was not long in making its counterattack. On August 10, Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird released a 193-page, statistics-laden apologia: "The Economics of Defense Spending." One brief section was given to discussing "cost overruns," and it was devoted almost entirely to criticizing an article written by Richard Kaufman. Because Kaufman works for Senator Proxmire's Joint Economic Committee, the target of the attack was hardly a coincidence. The Pentagon's aim, however, was poor. Indeed, a close reading of the section confirms the contention advanced by both Proxmire and the GAO report that cost overruns result from Pentagon mismanagement.

Much of the cost overrun problem can be traced to the Pentagon's continuing ineptitude in making cost estimates. The GAO report identified two major factors responsible: "(1) the lack of completeness of a plan stating what should be done and (2) inadequate documentation on what was done and how and why it was done." Unfortunately, the Pentagon does not appear to learn from its mistakes. For example, as recently as July 24, Senator Stuart Symington (D, Mo.) found it necessary to admonish Melvin Laird because the navy had just admitted that it did not even possess working drawings for its proposed Trident missile-firing submarine, and yet it was asking Congress for almost one billion dollars to start building it. (Later that week the Senate approved the navy's request.)

The Pentagon is concerned about cost overruns, but instead of trying to control them it seems more bent on finding cosmetics to cover them up: the most frequently applied is a reduction in the number of weapons to be purchased. By this method the Pentagon was able to reduce cost estimates by $11.2 billion in fiscal year 1971. Had the planned number of new ships, guns, planes and the like remained the same, however, cost overruns last year would have been almost $40 billion instead of $28.7 billion.

No one is happy about this. Pentagon critics reason that if the military is so eager to cut weapons to keep costs down and appearances up, then maybe the original request for those weapons was invalid. Pentagon supporters of the original requests are worried that these reductions will diminish our military might.

"Schedule slippages" (late deliveries) go hand in glove with bad cost estimates. The GAO report calcu-

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lated that the deployment of most new weapons had been significantly delayed by shoddy procurement practices. On the *average*, aircraft were delayed 15 percent; ships 22 percent; missiles 48 percent; vehicles and ordnance 52 percent; and electronics 56 percent. While some of these delays can be attributed to the incorporation of new technological advances, more often they were the result of "inaccurate or overly optimistic estimates of performance [or] . . . changed design to increase capability and/or to correct deficiencies." Slippage naturally increases cost because of inflation.

The Department of Defense has extensive regulations and a burgeoning bureaucracy to handle the development of new weapons, but too often the regulations are of the penny-wise, pound-foolish sort while the bureaucracy seems only to serve to fulfill Parkinson's prophecy of proliferating paperwork. When the matter is small, the system handles it by the book, but when the matter is large, the system may not work at all. So, while the navy will think nothing of asking Congress for almost one billion dollars for a new submarine even though it has no working drawings for the boat, it is likely to sink, by weight of paper alone, a small but reasonable request. One incident cited by the GAO report illustrates this point. The navy project office for the Mark 48 torpedo (a $2.2 billion program) made an urgent request for authority to let a $5 million "letter contract" to modify the torpedo's firing system. The report notes: "It took four months on an expedited 'rush' basis to get from a procurement request to a letter contract, during which time it was subjected to at least 174 control, review and approval points within 74 organizational elements at eight different management levels. . . . In addition, most of the precontract review and approval will be repeated as the contract is definitized into a negotiated fixed-price-type contract." With such institutionalized idiocy, is it any wonder that cost overruns have become the rule rather than the exception?

"There is a question whether, in the conceptual stages, attempts are made to establish clearly the precise use to which the weapon will be put or the impact of one weapon proposal on other programs. . . ." The authors of the GAO report were evidently concerned because they found that "some weapon systems appear to have been conceived and justified as independent systems." Representative Les Aspin (D, Wisc.), a freshman member of the Armed Services Committee, cited one very costly example of needless duplication. He found that the army is building two air-defense missiles which are almost identical in function. The improved Hawk missile system is being produced and deployed for $800 million at the same time the army is sinking $5.2 billion into the SAM-D missile program. The latter has already incurred an overrun of $1.3 billion, and "if the improved Hawk is as effective as army officials claim," Aspin said, "then the SAM-D is simply not needed." If it works (and considerable doubt exists that it will), the SAM-D would be able to intercept aircraft at very high altitudes. But, as Aspin noted, "the chances of our troops on the ground being attacked from aircraft at extremely high altitudes are practically nil." Although the improved Hawk missile is capable of defending troops against the mid-level and low-level bombing and strafing they are likely to encounter, the army refuses to drop the SAM-D, and Congress continues to authorize money for it.

The phrase "cost overrun" first gained wide usage because of the Pentagon's biggest blunder: the C-5A military transport plane. Built by the Lockheed Corporation of Marietta, Georgia, everything that could have gone wrong with the airplane did. Secretary of the Air Force Robert Seamans now admits that the plane's structure was "designed too close to the margin." Instead of the 30,000 flying hours for which it was designed, the C-5A is now expected to hold together for 7000 hours, providing the cargo load is kept below 80 percent of its designed maximum. Two C-5As have crashed, and unexpected failures have plagued the aircraft's subsystems. Seamans described one: "An engine actually pulled free of the aircraft, went shooting over the leading edge of the wing and went back quite a few hundred feet when the pylon [which is supposed to hold the engine on the wing] gave way during the runup of the engine." The actual cost of each C-5A is now more than twice the original estimate, and the air force, instead of getting 120 planes for $3.4 billion, is going to pay $4.9 billion for 81 planes. The many defects in the C-5A's structure and subsystems, which are not expected to be entirely cleared up until 1975, could cost hundreds of millions of dollars to remedy, but no one expects the remedy to restore to the C-5A the capabilities it once had on the drawing board.

The GAO report must have been a particularly bitter pill for Pentagon loyalists to swallow, revealing as it does just how profligate the military has been with the national treasury. For the most part, major weapons have been ill-conceived, poorly managed and scandalously expensive. Pentagon officials mutter assurances that they are improving their control over weapons spending, but the objective observer is at a loss to find recent evidence of such improvement. As weapons costs increase, the only economies evident are those resulting from cutting down the number of weapons to be bought. More money is being spent for weapons that do not work as advertised or, when they do, are inordinately expensive and behind schedule. With due apologies to the memory of Winston Churchill, it might be said of the Pentagon arms spending: never has been so much paid for so little so late.

Peter J. Ognibene

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How to Raise Money

The Farmer-Doctors

by Peter Barnes

Ophthalmology and orthopedics weren't the only subjects at the recent convention of the American Medical Association in San Francisco. On the agenda one day at the Fairmont Hotel were, among others, the following meetings: Tax Sheltered Investment Financial in the Bali Room, Mountain Shadows Ranch Tax Shelter Investments in the Garden Room, and Gemini Financial Tax Counsel in the Crocker Room.

Doctors who chose the Garden Room were greeted by Vincent R. Grillo, Jr., a handsome, fashionably dressed man in his 40s who is both a vice president of Computer Sciences Corp. and president of Mountain Shadows Ranch. About four years ago, Grillo told the meeting, he found himself with a terrible problem: he had $390,000 in ordinary income which, unless he devised a timely dodge, would be heavily taxed by the federal government. Then he discovered the myriad advantages of cattle ownership. If you buy a herd of cattle, you become, by definition, a farmer. You are then entitled to use the "cash basis" of accounting, a simplified method intended to ease real farmers' bookkeeping chores. Under this method you generally can deduct all expenses in the year that are incurred, even though you may be purchasing assets that are held for sale and income. A popular tax deferral scheme is to purchase a large amount of cattle feed on or shortly before December 31. The entire cost of the feed, including the interest paid on the money borrowed to buy it, can then be deducted from that year's taxable income (although the IRS has lately begun cracking down on excessive prepaid feed purchases). If you buy a herd of cattle and hold it for two years or more, the money you receive upon selling it becomes a "capital gain." It is then taxable at only half the rate of ordinary income. If you purchase a herd of cattle, you may deduct from your taxable income an amount equal to the depreciation of your animals. In fact, the deduction can be much larger than the true depreciation (150 percent), as well as a 20 percent first year bonus depreciation. If you invest in a herd of cattle you are eligible for a seven percent "investment credit." This is not simply a deduction from taxable income, but a credit you directly subtract from your federal income tax payment.

These four features of the tax code—immediate deductibility of expenses, conversion of ordinary income to capital gains, accelerated depreciation and the investment tax credit—can be converted by the wealthy investor into a substantial windfall. If the investor is in the 50 percent tax bracket or higher, he can sink $15,000 into a herd of cattle and save $16,000 in taxes in the first year alone! In many ways this beats oil as a tax shelter, since beef prices are high and you don't run the danger of drilling a dry hole.

To help doctors and others of comparable wealth take advantage of these back-door subsidies, Grillo created Mountain Shadows Ranch (it is actually "a corporation and a concept, not a place"). Herds of 100 cattle are sold to tax-savvy investors, branded with their chosen insignia, and fattened on leased land and feedlots. The "ranch" supervises the entire operation and receives a management fee.

Syndicates such as Mountain Shadows Ranch are increasingly popular these days. During 1970, there were offerings by cattle management firms in excess of $175 million. Oppenheimer Industries, Inc., one of the largest syndicators in the country, handles 140,000 head of cattle, including Governor Ronald Reagan's. Syndicates are also moving rapidly into other sectors of agriculture, for reasons plainly set forth in an Oppenheimer brochure: "Dairy pools serve the buyer looking principally for ordinary income. Fruit and nut orchards provide opportunities for capital gain profit . . . Ranch land is a tax shelter providing a hedge against inflation. Even row-crop farming, which in the past has been without allure to the average investor, can provide both economic and tax shelter benefits."

One of the most successful syndicators in California is Hollis B. Roberts, a close associate of San Diego financier C. Arnholdt Smith, a Nixon friend and booster. Roberts manages farmland owned by Texaco, Getty Oil, Prudential Life and about 50 other absentee owners. He recently purchased 25,000 acres from Tenneco, the Houston-based conglomerate that dominates the southern end of the San Joaquin valley, raising his total holdings of former Tenneco land to approximately 70,000 acres. Roberts' arrangement with Tenneco works to each party's advantage. Roberts receives a substantial management fee for developing the land with capital raised from tax-avoiding investors. Tenneco makes a hefty profit from land sales, packaging and marketing, without putting up a penny of the capital needed to raise the crops.

Another major new syndicator in California is the 295,000 acre Tejon Ranch, owned largely by the Chand-

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ler family, publishers of the Los Angeles *Times*. The Tejon Ranch recently announced that it is offering $16 million of limited partnership units through Dean Witter & Co. and the First Boston Corp. As with most offerings of this type, only persons in or above the 50 percent tax bracket, or with net worths of $200,000 or more, are eligible to participate. That takes in a lot of doctors, lawyers and movie stars, but excludes most working people.

With the money raised from wealthy tax avoiders, the Tejon Ranch will plant 21,000 new acres of wine grapes, potatoes and other crops on land recently irrigated by the California Water Project, which runs right through the Tejon property. The total cost of the state water project, including financing, is more than $8 billion, a sum that includes a tidy subsidy from state taxpayers. The Tejon Ranch was also the recipient last year of $88,566 in federal crop subsidies, despite the supposed $55,000 limit.

The Los Angeles *Times* loses all semblance of fairness on the subject of large landholdings and their subsidies. The newspaper editorially promoted the state water project, making little or no mention of critics' claims that it was not needed, too expensive, and would pass right through the Tejon Ranch. The *Times* led the attack on the recent Nader report on California land, highlighting its minor errors and obscuring its facts and arguments. Last March, when Senator Fred Harris (D, Okla.) held a full-day hearing in Los Angeles on the subject of land monopoly, the *Times* sent two reporters but carried only a trivial three-paragraph story on a back page. Perhaps to compensate, the Op Ed page editor, Ken Reich, asked Harris to write a column on land monopoly. Harris submitted a piece that made no mention of the Tejon Ranch and its owners. Reich was about to run it when he was told to wait for publisher Otis Chandler's return from a safari in Africa. On Chandler's return, the Senator's column was killed.

Syndicates such as the Tejon Ranch's are a prime cause of a rather strange phenomenon in American agriculture. On the one hand, Professor Charles Davenport of the University of California at Davis has pointed out, the before-tax return on farm investments has declined from about six percent to less than four percent during the last 20 years. This compares with about ten percent for most manufacturing firms, and with more than five percent for simply leaving money in the bank. On the other hand, investment in farm assets has increased by about 260 percent during the same 20-year period. This is a most unusual situation: increasing investments on decreasing returns.

The explanation of the incongruity is that before-tax profits do not give a true picture of farm economics. The massive new investments in land, cattle and crop production have been made largely by syndicates and corporations that could care less about farm income; their objective is to farm the public treasury, not the land. A 1968 study by the US Department of Agriculture found that of the wealthiest 66,000 individuals filing farm tax returns in 1963, more than two-thirds reported a net farm loss. Those who actually eked a profit out of farming, by contrast, were likely to be quite poor. Another interesting pattern—casting doubt upon the notion of big-farm efficiency—was that the largest farms were frequent before-tax money losers.

The impact of tax-loss farming on real farmers and farmworkers can be seen most clearly in California, where subsidies for wealthy landowners are a venerable tradition. (One of the latest and largest tax breaks for giant California landowners is the 1966 Williamson Act, a state law ostensibly designed to preserve open spaces. As of 1971, approximately 9.5 million acres were receiving property tax reductions totaling more than $40 million annually. More than a fourth of that acreage is owned by twelve large landholders, including Tenneco, the Tejon Ranch, the Southern Pacific, Standard Oil of California, J. G. Boswell and the Irvine Ranch Co.) Several years ago, two University of California economists, Gerald Dean and Gordon King, predicted that irrigation of new lands in the San Joaquin valley would lead to serious overproduction and a consequent drop in prices and income for real farmers. It is now becoming clear that most of the new crop production in California will be developed not only with subsidized water and on undertaxed land, but also with tax-dodging capital. Meanwhile, some of the smaller farming communities in the valley are starting to die, as farmers who live on the land are replaced by corporations and investors who live hundreds of miles away. The vision of a depopulated countryside, marked by giant feedlots and tax-loss farms, is steadily becoming reality.

Agricultural workers are likely to fare little better than small farm owners. A statement from the prospectus of the Tejon Ranch syndication (which has no contract with any labor union) indicates what is in store: "Grapes and nut crops can be harvested mechanically; citrus crops can be harvested by hand over a relatively extended period. These crops, which constitute approximately 67 percent of the total crops to be planted by 1976, are thus less likely to be adversely affected by labor disputes, stoppages or shortages."

Four years ago, an effort was made by Senator Lee

COMING: Richard Parker reports on the not so affluent society of the blue-collar worker

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Metcalf (D, Mont.) and others to limit the amount of farm losses that non-farmers could deduct from other income. That effort resulted only in some meaningless modifications of the Tax Reform Act of 1969. What is needed now is more than a revision of the tax laws. There must be a broad commitment by the federal government to assist agricultural workers, rather than doctors, in becoming farm owners.

Platform Populism

Miami and the Seeds of Port Huron

by Tom Geoghegan

Beneath the reassuring tones of the politicians . . . is the pervading feeling that there simply are no alternatives, that our times have witnessed the exhaustion not only of utopias, but of any new departures as well. —The Port Huron Statement, 1962

And is it any wonder that the people are skeptical and cynical of the whole political process? —The Democratic Platform, 1972

You can't fool the GOP with any phony populism or New Politics. Their platform exposes the once-great Democratic Party bent on surrender abroad and "convulsive leftward lurches" at home, duped by a radical clique which would "scorn our nation's past and would blight its future." The only past that Republicans scorn, apparently, is "the nightmarish time" of the '60s, those bad old days of riots and Vietnam and radical social programs. Oddly enough, it seems Senator McGovern will mention very few such programs in his campaign this year. He preaches a sober bookkeeper's radicalism, an almost passive reordering of priorities—one that takes away defense funds and supplements incomes.

But the Republicans are right to sense that their old rivals are groping for new targets, though they aren't quite sure what these might be. The Democrats as a party have given them few clues. With a morbid eye on Archie Bunker's vote, they are more concerned than ever to sound folksy, like all those farmers-cabbies-housewives they kept splicing into the dead air of their telethon last month in Miami. Even the platform—this year, for once, an important document—was a showpiece of populist zip. "For the People" rambles on for nine chapters, and though it does little more than repackage the Great Society grocery list, it tries in its new folk wisdom to sound restless with the nostrums of liberal reform. It hankers after the home-grown, radical rhetoric of the 19th-century Populists and 20th-century Bull Moosers, but without finding much there it can use. Except for a swipe at the railroads (an anachronistic plank in the age of Amtrak), the main thrust of the 1892 platform of the People's Party was to encourage the people to keep their spare change. When the Populists pronounced that "wealth belongs to him who creates it," they could have been spouting either a Marxist theory of value or small-fry capitalist homiletics. The Populist obsession with liquidity extended even to their own pygmy governments: "All state and national revenues shall be limited to the necessary expenses of government, economically and honestly administered." We do not demean the radicalism of Tom Watson or Sockless Jerry Simpson by suggesting their limited value to the phrasemakers of the New Politics of the '70s.

Nor were the Progressives of 1912, the party of Herbert Croly and Herbert Hoover, a ready source of inspiration or direction for the Democrats in Miami Beach this year. Progressive broadsides against "invisible government" of special interests catch moods the Democrats wish to capture, but the Bull Moosers didn't have the feisty proletarianism of the New Politics. Apostles of referenda and primaries, the Progressives had a fairly elitist faith in "a new instrument of government" more likely to co-opt than destroy the big trusts. They were angry, aroused, and yet quaintly

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confident that sound business methods could put the country aright.

The true ancestor of the Miami platform is still hidden in the closet—the SDS charter first drafted 10 years ago in Port Huron by Tom Hayden. With SDS today in disrepute, blasted even by the *new* New Left for being out of touch with "the people," this kind of victory is hollow but always logical, with the radical left always running out of steam and the moderate left always running out of ideas.

In *A Populist Manifesto*, Jack Newfield and Jeff Greenfield jeer at SDS for slighting the "concrete economic interests" of working people (forgetting the Progressive Labor faction, which made a fetish of them) and for indulging their middle-class malaise. But Populism, narrowly defined as an attack on economic privilege, is what the Miami Beach Democratic platform rejects: the problems of the people are deeper than their concrete economic interests. "The people" of the 1972 platform are straight out of Port Huron—not the John Q. Publics or the aggrieved farmers reaching for their pitchforks but the alienated, the bored, the apathetic. There's no biblical wrath here, the platform just delivers some old New Left rabbit punches: "the people are *skeptical*" of all platitudes; "the people are *cynical*" about promises. And the Democrats of 1972 will "speak to those doubts." "No government can by itself restore the lost faith," the platform modestly admits, for the people must struggle with a vast bureaucracy that is demoralizing. Impersonal, not authentic government, Port Huron called it. The party half-articulates the Port Huron challenge of turning liberal government into participatory democracy. No more cheap talk in Hayden's platform about throwing the rascals out: the people are isolated from one another, they must be brought together into a community "as a means of finding meaning in personal life," one that is "personally authentic."

In its bolder passages, the Miami Beach platform takes a few small steps into the Rousseauistic future:

"What do the people want?"

"They want three things:

► They want a personal life that makes us all feel that life is worth living;

► They want a social environment whose institutions promote the good of all; and

► They want a physical environment whose resources are used for the good of all."

Here may be the first campaign commitment of a major national party to soul-satisfying "authenticity." At this point, the platform breaks for an interlude of new Populism, rejecting the dole and demanding law-and-order, but it then returns to this inchoate "right to full participation in government and the political process." And how is this right to be exercised? Mainly through more quotas and primaries around election year, as if through some sort of McGovern-Fraser guidelines there could be popular takeover of a remote federal machine. Port Huron called for "public groupings," not groupings of representatives, which would help people make direct, primary decisions about even their personal lives. The Port Huron statement, however, did not resolve the tension this would create between a new radical individualism and a new popular sovereignty. The Democrats also ignore that dilemma, a platform being no place for dialectics.

But parties are at least expected to have programs to match their rhetoric. The Democrats just furrow their brows and say, "It is time now to rethink and reorder the institutions of this country so that everyone . . . can participate in the decision-making process inherent in the democratic heritage to which we aspire." This is at best an ethic and at worst bombast.

Ironically, only the George Wallace Democrats made serious use of the old SDS rhetoric to criticize American institutions. Their minority report has a ruthless democratic thrust. It asks tough questions about judges who ignore Congress to make laws, Presidents who ignore Congress to make wars and bureaucrats who ignore Congress to "pursue abstract and artificial social theories." It suggests Americans will have to sit down and write the social contract all over again. In contrast, the McGovern Democrats have no intention of letting participatory democracy undermine the constitutional status quo. For all the talk about personal fulfillment, their platform trails off into interest group liberalism—a few more welfare programs, a little more bargaining and dealing with tenant organizations, welfare rights groups, veterans, elderly, American Indians, consumers—but without any institutional reforms. In brief, the Democrats promise more old-left new deals in the language of the New Left, a tactic almost calculated to escalate apathy.

The danger of the Democratic platform (and its so-called "populist" rhetoric) is that by its explicit promise of social reintegration, it exploits the political potential of the "new anxieties" of private identity. It wants ordinary people to take more responsibility for complex social crises—without having any more power than they did before. Even if more politics were the cure for the distresses in our lives, the Democrats don't seem to have the stomach to give real power to the people. The logic of participatory democracy, as the Wallace Democrats know, requires, for instance, a reshuffling of the judiciary to give the majority of people control over the root-and-branch issue in American politics—race—which David Broder has called the single issue with enough emotional punch to realign the parties.

But the courts are only one stumbling block to participatory democracy. The huge federal leviathan, which survived unscathed at Miami, is sure to compromise any new populist attack on economic privilege and corporate conspiracy. In our economy, the people's government is not another policeman on the

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block but the air which all big business must breathe. After a century of progressive effort, Washington is regulating and subsidizing and even drawing up the entire demand curve of many large firms. "Consumers, citizens and taxpayers constitute too diffuse and amorphous a group to compete in this league," Richard Posner wrote last fall in *Public Interest*. "The larger the role of government in the economy . . . the worse the problem of public powers employed for private ends will become." Though calling for tougher antitrust laws against big-business establishment, the Democratic platform accepts a federal establishment already too mammoth to work properly.

Thus, the New Democrats are caught between Hayden's world, where politics is expected to deal with the whole man and his sense of helplessness, and the Great Society, where a faceless bureaucracy indemnifies anyone or any group big enough to make trouble for it. The Democrats can't promise, like Wallace, to throw briefcases into the Potomac, nor will they tear down the *ancien régime* in the name of Port Huron. In place of genuine participation, then, the Democrats are left only with cant about truth-in-government, inspired by the Pentagon papers, and a cult of "sincere-ness" inspired by Ellsberg and McGovern himself. More than the war itself, the Pentagon papers have deflected radical Democrats into conspiracy theories and image politics. A bread-and-butter issue like tax reform now figures in their rhetoric as just a particularly good example of hypocrisy in high places.

Larry O'Brien told the Miami Beach convention that the Democrats would level with the people. But before you level, you must have something to level about. It may be fine to open up FBI files and close down army spy rings, but it is ludicrous to expect thousands of honchos at HEW and HUD to start "leveling" with the people when the Democrats return to power. The platform hails a new era of participatory democracy, but the politicians simply promise a new era of good feelings between the people and government.

It may be that, bankrupt as it is of better ideas for fuller participation, the Democratic Party can do no more than incant the name of the people. I'd like to suggest, however, that there is still time to go through an almost discredited exercise in 18th-century political science: to think through the republican principles on which Americans founded their constitutional government, see how far we have strayed from them and whether and how we might return to them. The Miami platform rightly addresses popular distrust of those in public authority. But it ignores the first halting steps of Congress to reclaim its position as the central institution in federal government—so far the most dramatic response to the so-called "crisis of confidence." For the lessons of this crisis, whether its particular form be Vietnam or housing, are laid out not in the Pentagon papers but in *The Federalist Papers*.

The *Federalist* authors saw the United States as a republic, with government in the hands of delegates necessarily removed from the general citizenry. But they had a peculiarly modern concern for protecting the citizen from government tyranny and faction through a system of checks and balances. The genius of the document is that it was written to fend off monsters like "a standing army," not to mention a standing army bankrolled at $80 billion per annum.

The *Federalist* authors assumed Congress would be a more popular representative institution than the presidency, if only because it had more people to represent *the* people. Today Congress may be the last institutional alternative to the civic ennui that the Miami platform indicts. Liberals have sneered at Congress, particularly the "popular" branch—the House—because they confuse legitimate institutions, which Congress is, with progressive institutions, which Congress often is not. To strengthen the legitimate representative character of the government we may have to sacrifice a little of its progressive character. For however frustrating, Congress is not impersonal or "inauthentic." It helps foster independent publics, voluntary and legitimate face-to-face relationships with agencies and bureaucrats. Institutional reform at this level would throw any issue into new relief. Poorly staffed and financed, Congress defers to the "experts." In every area of government, it has delegated too much decision-making to trade associations, private groups and public corporations that even the President cannot control. Though it is foolish to expect warm, meaningful relationships between the people and their federal agencies, it is not too much to expect these agencies to have precise standards to follow—and the setting of those is a legislative responsibility.

Should Congress begin again to hoard its authority, the Democrats might have to accept greater limits on presidential government. That would not be bad. They have put too much faith in the power of the FDRs and JFKs to pull the people into the political process. Presidential elections can educate and entertain, but they are not the vehicles by which the people debate and decide issues.

The Miami platform is faithful to the spirit of centralized government, content with the post-parliamentary stage which most Western liberal democracies have entered. Its New Left rhetoric of participation may evoke nostalgia for the old sense of group responsibility that Tocqueville saw in American life. It may be a half-conscious itch for a government by public discussion at the national level, for congressional leadership. But in place of such leadership, the platform talks plebiscites and presidential democracy. What the party did in Miami was turn the Port Huron statement on its head, thundering at the beast and then promising to feed it. The Wallace Democrats had a populist last word: "What this platform says is 'Government has failed—give us more government.'"

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Israel Isn't the Only Issue

McGovern's Jewish Problem

by Paul R. Wieck

As a boy in one of Brooklyn's Jewish neighborhoods, Rep. Bert Podell (D) recalls getting some advice on voting from his grandmother. The way to do it, she explained, was to go in and pull the "Democrat" lever. If, in error, your hand touched the Republican one, it would "wither right there" in the polling booth. Today, Podell represents the most heavily Jewish district in the nation, a slice of Brooklyn running from Flatbush to Coney Island. It's a middle-class enclave that 50 and 60 years ago offered a refuge for Jews fleeing the tenements of the Lower East Side, and it has long since turned against the Vietnam war. But today, Podell says, "more than 50 percent" of his constituents are talking Nixon. Podell lists nine or 10 reasons for pro-Nixon leanings but cautions "there'll be a big drop-off in the Nixon vote in the polling place." The deep, emotional attachment among Jews to the Democratic Party will bring them back once their hands start reaching for that lever, Podell believes.

As one goes through the catalogue of grievances Podell hears from his constituents, one gets a picture of a middle-aged parent, a modestly successful businessman. His temple would be either Conservative or Orthodox. He is distressed over the crime seeping into his own neighborhood; he resents the "hippies" around McGovern, and he is worried about his college-age daughter infected by this strange cult; he frets about the future of Israel, distrusts McGovern's "fuzzy" views on economics, and is critical of the job "quotas" demanded by militant blacks and Puerto Ricans that appear to threaten the aspirations of Jewish boys and girls from poorer families.

But he's still a Jew, still deeply committed to human dignity, to offering a helping hand to the less fortunate, still imbued with that special social consciousness, and not a little wary of all "those Germans" around Nixon in the White House and the way they play around with something as precious as personal liberties. He's appalled by the waste and bloodshed in Vietnam. Politically, he's become two men—one tugged to the right by the troubling aspects of a society in upheaval, the other imbued with the liberalism of the past. Which man will pull that lever in November?

McGovern's difficulties with the Jewish vote surfaced in the primaries and initially centered around claims that, in contrast to Hubert Humphrey and Henry Jackson, he was "soft" on Israel. Unlike Humphrey and Jackson, McGovern hadn't traveled the Jewish fund-raising circuit over the years; thus, his views weren't as well known to the thousands who attend United Jewish Appeal (UJA) and Israel Bond banquets. It left him vulnerable when the attack began in April and May. McGovern's essential style is that of a legislative advocate, a style which has gotten him into trouble on other issues as he tosses out ideas for consideration. In the case of Israel, two statements were dredged up by the researchers for Humphrey and Jackson. One, a quote from *The New York Times* of March 3, 1971, had him saying "perhaps the solution is to internationalize Jerusalem." A second, made on the Senate floor July 20, 1970, found him urging sale of jets to Israel with the caveat "such aircraft should not be made available for forays over Arab territory for the purpose of sustaining the limited but real war which has persisted since the six-day conflict in 1967." Both read badly in Jewish circles in the summer of 1972.

However, McGovern had moved quickly to remedy the *New York Times* quote. Two days later, on March 5, 1971, he issued a statement saying "outside powers" shouldn't dictate a solution, that a negotiated settlement between Israel and the Arab states should be "the cornerstone" of US policy and that a solution for Jerusalem might be administration by Israel with "international guarantees" of open access. More recently, he has called upon the US to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel by moving our embassy there. He dropped his condition on use of aircraft after the 1970 speech.

The charges against McGovern, which also included a distortion of a vote on aid to Israel, popped up in full-page ads and speeches. No notice was taken of statements correcting the quotes. There were also strong hints his call for sharp cuts in military spending would weaken the country to the point that it would be unable to help maintain the balance of power in Europe and the Mideast. Within McGovern circles, there is contempt for Cold War dogma and military spending—an attitude alarming to those who see the bipartisan foreign policy that emerged out of that Cold War as a shelter for Israel's interests. Among youthful antiwar

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backers of McGovern, what is described as "a negative attitude" toward Israel was surfacing early in the year.

Ignored during the spring assault on McGovern's position on Israel was a very significant contribution he was making to help erase "the negative attitude" of some young people toward Israel. Early in January of 1971, he met with key Jewish leaders asking his help. McGovern responded by asking youthful audiences to whom he spoke to accept the stand that Israel should be supported at the same time the Vietnamese adventure was denounced. Rick Stearns, a key McGovern aide, put it this way in a letter to *Near East Report:* "One of the most positive contributions Sen. McGovern and his campaign have made to discussion of Middle Eastern Affairs is an effective defense of the distinction between the two cases."

Despite this positive contribution and repeated denials of soft-on-Israel charges, McGovern's pattern of support in Jewish areas in the primaries was spotty. Humphrey and Jackson split the bulk of Florida's Jewish vote while in Ohio McGovern scored in affluent Jewish suburbs such as Shaker Heights. California's vote split, with Humphrey strong in Fairfax, a working-class enclave, while McGovern took Beverly Hills and the San Fernando Valley.

After Miami Beach, McGovern took a nose dive in the polls. McGovern's managers dismiss the drop in his Jewish support with a claim that both Humphrey in 1968 and Truman in 1948, the two Democratic candidates whose late surges they hope to imitate, were in just as bad trouble with Jewish voters in the polls right after they were nominated. Both ultimately lured back most of them although Truman lost a huge chunk of New York's Jewish vote to Henry A. Wallace.

By mid-August, there were hopeful signs for McGovern. Concerned lest support of Israel become a partisan issue after a quarter-of-a-century of bipartisan support, Jewish leaders began speaking out. On August 6, the board of governors of B'nai B'rith passed a resolution viewing with "disfavor the formation of Jewish committees in behalf of any candidate for office." McGovernites interpreted this as a rebuke to a newly-organized committee of Jews for Nixon. On August 7, Rabbi Arthur Herzberg, president of the American Jewish Congress, issued a statement saying his group has examined the positions of both parties on Israel and Soviet Jewry and is "gratified that the record . . . shows no real division on these issues." He cautioned that "recent declarations of some American Jewish leaders in support of one candidate for the presidency against the other are not only not helpful but they can hurt Jewish and Zionist interests."

Simultaneously, Nixon came under attack on the problem of Soviet Jewry. It was prompted by the statement attributed to Governor Rockefeller that Nixon while in Moscow had been able to get an agreement that 35,000 Jews could migrate to Israel annually from the Soviet Union. It turned out to be untrue. Instead, the situation of Soviet Jews has deteriorated, giving McGovern a chance to go on the offensive August 18 in a lengthy statement charging the Soviet Union with holding its Jews "as hostages of the state" by demanding a huge exit visa ranging up to $23,000 for educated persons. Ethan Geto, a political aide of Bronx County Executive Robert Abrams, who's helping out in the McGovern campaign, sees signs of slippage for Nixon on this issue. He cites the Greater New York Conference on Soviet Jewry, the "single largest activist group on a single issue," as "feeling nice about Nixon two weeks ago." However, at a recent rally, Malcolm Hoenline, executive director of the group, bitterly attacked Nixon as "a man who hasn't done anything for us."

In a sense, the support Nixon is gathering on the issue of Israel seems a bit strange in view of the fact it took three years of prodding from Congress before he agreed to sell jets to Israel. In the meantime, Secretary of State William Rogers unveiled his plan for an imposed settlement which would move the boundaries back to pre-1967 lines with only minor adjustments. Golda Meir promptly labeled it "not acceptable."

If McGovern wins the argument raging among Jews over support of Israel and Soviet Jewry, will it guarantee an outpouring of Jewish money and support? Right now, it's generally agreed Jewish contributors are "holding back" and awaiting developments, and McGovern could use some of these traditionally liberal funds. The B'nai B'rith statement reminded the politicians that "Jews do not vote as a bloc, or in response to any single political issue. Jews are concerned with all the factors that enter into a nation's well-being—the justice and wisdom of its diplomacy, the strength and progress of its economy, the unity of its people achieved through wise leadership and just social legislation." A similar sentiment is echoed by I. F. Kenen in *Near East Report*, a publication he edits: "We have always believed that most Jews like to think of themselves as independents rather than as a partisan bloc which could be appealed to, manipulated, or delivered by power brokers." Obviously, that would not be the case if one candidate were clearly unfriendly to Israel.

The bulk of the electorate in this country supports Israel and is sympathetic toward the plight of Soviet Jewry. There's no reason to believe Jewish voters won't be reacting to the same set of issues as their fellow Americans although perhaps in a way that is more traditionally liberal.

There *are* distinct differences, mostly based on economic status, dividing the Jewish community this year. Go to the Brooklyn and Bronx neighborhoods or New York's Lower East Side where poor or working-class Jews live and, important as Israel and Soviet Jewry are to them, there are other issues bothering

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them just as much. One is the "quotas" demanded by black and Puerto Rican groups, quotas that would assure them jobs and opportunities in the same percentage as their relation to the population. To working-class whites in the Northeast, be they Jews or ethnic Catholics, the quotas represent a threat to them and the aspirations they have for their children.

Concern over the quota system became so widespread in the Bronx and Brooklyn that McGovern's managers went to him for a statement. In a letter to Phillip E. Hoffman of the American Jewish Committee released August 18, McGovern said he "reject(s) the quota system as detrimental to American society. I believe it is both necessary and possible to open the doors that have long been shut to minority-group members without violating basic principles of nondiscrimination and without abandoning the merit system."

One wonders whether McGovern, as a "protest" candidate, has really tapped the widespread alienation in this country, and not just among Jews. Certainly, he's spoken to the widespread disquiet on the left of the political spectrum, among students, militants, etc. Significant as this protest has been over the last decade, one has to question if it's the real wellspring of protest in 1972. Recently, I read hundreds of letters written to a western congressman by constituents in answer to an invitation to outline what they consider the most important problem. One recurrent theme was that services to middle America have broken down completely. People are alarmed over crime and the failure of the police to protect them, over the cost and quality of repair work, over medical care, real estate practices, hippies with pockets full of food stamps. They're unhappy with the quality of their lives. Thus far, McGovern has been skirting the problem of alienation in middle America, often by offering traditional liberal solutions.

If he's to win over Jewish voters plus those millions of other Americans, he'll have to do more than take the right stand on Israel and Soviet Jewry. He'll have to prove himself a credible candidate, a man aware of and capable of tackling problems in a forceful way. If the public decides he's incapable of governing, McGovern will be lucky to do as well as Goldwater did in 1964.

The Nixon Watch

Beach Party for the President

by John Osborne

Miami Beach

This report on the promotional fantasy that the President and his imagists chose to make of the Republican convention begins with a little advice to people who think of themselves as liberals and have a gut belief that the country should be able to do better for itself than it will if it gives Richard Nixon another four years in the White House.

The advice is to take the fantasy and the Republicans who played their appointed parts in it very seriously indeed. A reporter could not be here through the week of public and secret committee work that preceded the convention without perceiving that these are serious people, seriously engaged in preparing the way to the victory that they expect in November and intent upon using the victory to consolidate Republican power for years to come over a nation molded and accustomed to a Republican pattern of minimal and orderly change. There is a reality behind the projected fantasy, a strength in these happy products and beneficiaries of an ordered society, that must be recognized and respected if the advocates of a more open and relaxed and generous society who put their hopes in George McGovern are to have the slightest chance of prevailing. Senator McGovern is trying to provoke a contest of personalities, on the assumption that he attracts and Nixon repels enough voters to decide the outcome. The President and his advisers have been afraid, but are less afraid now than they were a few weeks ago, that it could be turned into just that kind of contest. The damage that Senator McGovern has done to himself, at least temporarily, and a conviction that the marvelous chemistry of the

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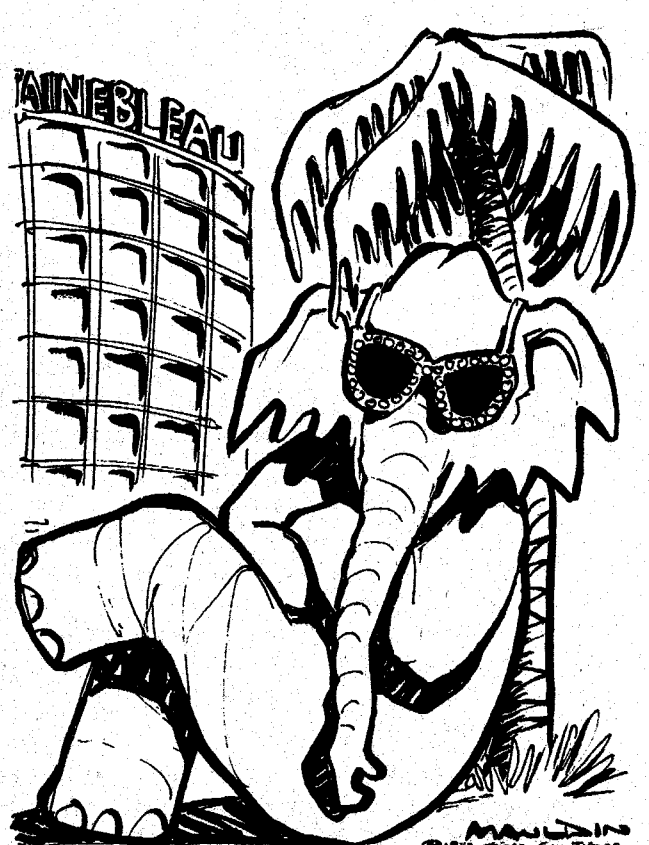
presidency has transformed Nixon from a repellent into an attractive personality, have persuaded some of his advisers and seem to have persuaded him that the kind of contest they recently dreaded would be to his advantage and to his opponent's disadvantage. Ten days with the President's Republicans in Miami Beach have persuaded me that it's a secondary question, at best. The question that matters, the question the voters will be answering in November, is whether enough of them to give Mr. Nixon the anticipated victory see in his Republicans at Miami Beach and in the life and society that they personify the life and society that most Americans want for themselves.

The Republicans at the Miami Beach convention were mostly white, mostly well-off, mostly in or near middle age, mostly male. Fifty-six of the 1348 delegates and 84 of the 1348 alternate delegates were black. Women were in the minority, though the largest minority they have ever managed to muster at a Republican convention. These familiar statistics barely suggest the essential point, which is that the Republican Party mirrored at this convention is predominantly determined to preserve the character and the attitudes and the balance of demographic and regional power that produced the 1972 proportions. The party wants more young voters, more blacks and minority "ethnics." It did more at this convention to attract them with changes in structure and rules than the boldest advocates of change expected it to do. But what it refused to do was more indicative of the party's fundamental nature than what it did.



Wake me when it's over.

It refused to require state and local party organs to do anything whatever to draw the wanted young, blacks and women into the fold and further refused to require that they be sent in enlarged proportions to the 1976 convention. One of the declared reasons for declining to go beyond encouragement to mandatory requirement was at once spurious and a testament to the ability of otherwise rational people to deceive themselves. The argument that invariably quelled the calls in the pre-convention committee meetings for direct and drastic change was that the McGovern Democrats had taken the mandatory route and look what they had done to the Democratic Party and to its July convention in the same hall at Miami Beach. The myth that the Democratic convention was a chaotic disaster, rather than the orderly proceeding that it actually was, figured prominently and frequently in the Republican debate. The other reasons advanced were more cogent and harder to question on factual grounds. Mandatory requirements meant quotas, and quotas were acknowledged by the most insistent proponents of an open and broadened party to be bad in principle and awkward in practice. Explicit requirements, however carefully they might be phrased to minimize or evade the quota stigma, would invite a plethora of credentials disputes and, what was worse, would stimulate litigation and judicial intervention of the sort that was already plaguing the party. All of these arguments, genuine and spurious, were highly convenient to the dominant Republicans who want to keep the party pretty much as it is, with a premium on disciplined order and, so they suppose, a growing appeal to voters who are presumed to want the same quality in their society and their lives.

This desire and this appraisal of the public mood conditioned everything that the convention and its preparatory committees did in Miami Beach. The fantasy devised by the President's professional promotionists and presented on television was designed to exaggerate the degree of order and unity that actually exists within the party and to contrast the conveyed impression with the potential for disorder that is associated in Nixon propaganda with George McGovern and his Democrats. Adding up the factors that assist the President and his publicists in this endeavor is a fascinating exercise. Among the factors are the waverings and contradictions that have appeared, or been made to appear, to mar the performance of Senator McGovern since he was nominated. His contribution to the Nixon strategy in this respect has been substantial enough to arouse an odd worry. Over morning coffee on the second day of the convention, a Nixon assistant remarked with a distinctly unconvincing laugh that he was beginning to wish the news media would pay less attention than they had been paying to the senator's slips and troubles. He dis-

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cerned a danger, the assistant said, that the anticipated victory would be adjudged a McGovern disaster rather than a Nixon triumph.

No such reservation diminished the pleasure with which the Nixon people contemplated the anti-Nixon and antiwar street protests. The obstructions of traffic and access to the convention hall, the burning of pot and flags, the trashing of a hotel lobby and the abuse, verbal and physical, aimed at delegates heightened the contrast between the forces of order and the forces of disorder that the campaign tacticians wanted to make. The tragedy for the country, though not for the Nixon people, was that the miscellaneous yippies, fags, dikes and extreme militants who monopolized the news during the first days of the convention obscured the steady discipline of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War and the main forces of dissent assembled by David Dellinger and Rennie Davis in the Miami Conventions Coalition. Watching the unkempt legions of the outraged and in some instances outrageous young at their work in the streets, I concluded that they were driven to excess by a sense of their own futility. I was torn between admiration for the best of them and regret that they were so effectively assisting the Nixon design.

The sole issue that caused a ruckus on the convention floor got there only because the party was under the pressure of a suit brought by the Ripon Society, a tiny organization of liberal and mostly young Republicans. A federal judge in the District of Columbia upheld the society's contention that the method of apportioning national convention delegates among the states was unconstitutionally arbitrary and forbade the 1972 convention to apply it to the 1976 convention. The overturned rule was heavily weighted in favor of small states and against the big states; it was especially dear to southern and some western Republicans. The effort of big-state liberals to seize the advantage from small-state conservatives and confer it upon themselves with a new rule raised a tremendous storm in two convention committees, the Republican National Committee and finally on the convention floor. The end results were a sound defeat for the liberals and a revised rule, also of doubtful constitutionality, which increases the total number of delegates and the size of 48 state delegations but leaves the smaller states with just about the proportionate weight they previously enjoyed. One of the few laughable features of this thoroughly honed convention was the solemnly asserted claim of the liberal and conservative antagonists that it wasn't a fight between them for control of the 1976 convention. It was precisely that. A victory for the liberals could have doomed whatever chance Vice President Spiro Agnew may have for elevation to the presidency and improved the rather dim prospects of Senator Charles Percy of Illinois, who was accused in committee of supporting the liberal position for that reason. The White House claim that the numerous Nixon assistants who were in Miami Beach before and throughout the convention stayed out of the apportionment struggle was false. Nixon men put together the basic elements of the amendment that was finally adopted, and others followed the complex committee proceedings like sparrows fluttering over an imperiled fledgling.

The major and most obvious White House oversight was reserved for the party platform. It is loaded with misplaced cracks at George McGovern, the hard tone of the references to the Vietnam war would give me chills if I attached much importance to them, and the harsh anti-busing plank reflects Nixon at his vote-hunting worst. But, considering that it is in essence a Nixon production, the document on the whole could be a lot worse than it is. I take most of the hard-line planks to be concessions to party conservatives that need not debar the President from choosing a different course in the second term if he is so inclined. I have a hunch that on many domestic issues (busing excluded) he will be so inclined if he is reelected.

The resident honcho for domestic purposes in Miami Beach was John D. Ehrlichman, the assistant for domestic affairs. A White House man said of Ehrlichman's convention role, "John is the gentleman with the feather-light touch on the lady's arm, guiding her across the street." Two of his assistants, Edward Harper and Edward L. Morgan, were in regular communication with the platform committee staff. The

Sir, you said if they ain't got proper badges, stop 'em, whoever they are.

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absent but supreme honcho was H. R. Haldeman, who spent the pre-convention week at Camp David, near Washington, with the President. Assistants in Miami Beach consulted him by telephone on critical problems. Reaching him was difficult at times and when it was the decisions were either delayed or evaded. Henry Kissinger, who accompanied the President to Miami and happily preened for TV cameras within minutes of his first arrival at the convention hall, was represented during the pre-convention week by one of his NSC assistants, John Lehman. Lehman and Ehrlichman were involved in the two most direct and explicit White House interventions in the final platform process. One of the interventions was the only instance in which the platform committee was flatly told that the President wanted certain language and would accept no other language. It concerned a foreign policy plank (I don't know which one), there was a fierce fight within the committee, and the President's language was accepted.

The other direct intervention concerned the labor plank. Ehrlichman telephoned Representative John Rhodes of Arizona, the touchy and independent committee chairman, and said he was relaying a message straight from the President. The message was that the President wanted a labor plank that would be thoroughly acceptable to organized labor, the references in the 1968 platform to the Taft-Hartley Act and its hated section 14-B, which authorizes government intervention in emergency strikes, were to be dropped entirely, and above all there must not be the slightest intimation that the Republican Party and the administration favor right-to-work laws which bar the closed shop. Rhodes never mentioned this conversation to the full committee, but other members relayed the President's wishes with such assurance that all present understood that they were getting the White House word. Again there was a fierce fight, and again the President prevailed. Proof that AFL-CIO President George Meany was pleased, as the President intended him to be, came when Treasury Secretary George Shultz, an old hand at labor dealings, flew to Washington for a golf game with Meany and returned to Miami Beach the following day. Meany had invited Shultz to be his partner in a tournament sponsored by Meany.

The chief platform writers were Bryce N. Harlow and Martin Anderson. Harlow was a Nixon assistant with cabinet rank during the first two years of the present term. A White House and congressional staff man, he has worked on every Republican platform since 1956. When not in government employ, he has been Procter and Gamble's chief Washington lobbyist for many years. Anderson, also a former Nixon assistant, is still an intermittent White House consultant on per diem pay. He is a senior fellow of the Hoover Institution at Stanford University. Since he went to work on the platform for Rhodes last April, he has been on leave and the Republican National Committee payroll. When a reporter asked Rhodes whether it was proper for a corporate lobbyist to be writing a party platform, the chairman gave the impression that Harlow was on his staff and added, "When he works for me, he works for me and nobody else." This was not technically true, though anyone who knows Bryce Harlow would suppose that it was true in spirit. Harlow continued to be paid by Procter and Gamble during his work for Rhodes in Washington and Miami Beach. I am told and believe that a newspaper report that Harlow blocked a plank advocating a tighter lobby registration law is in error. The plank died in a subcommittee with which Harlow had no connection.

Representative Paul McCloskey of California, who briefly ran against Nixon for the presidential nomination in order to dramatize opposition to the Vietnam war, gave two antiwar veterans guest tickets to the convention hall on the final night, when Vice President Agnew was nominated and he and the President, who had been nominated the previous night, made their acceptance speeches. The veterans, one of them in a wheel chair, displayed end-the-war signs and tried a little heckling. Outside the hall, police doused hundreds of antiwar demonstrators with tear gas and, there and elsewhere in Miami Beach, arrested hundreds. Remarkably, in view of their past readiness to make capital of disturbances going on near them, neither Nixon nor Agnew took a crack at the protesters. One got a notion watching the Vice President and listening to his unmemorable speech, that he wouldn't mind being on that or a similar podium in 1976, accepting the party's nomination for the presidency.

The President's speech, hardly the historic document that the convention chairman called it, provided a guide to what was coming in the campaign. George McGovern was going to catch it. The President was going after him on the positions he took during the primaries, not on the revised positions that he was preparing on Vietnam. While negotiations to end the war were proceeding, Nixon would be taking the hard line so long as there was no settlement. The country would be hearing often, beginning with three campaign stops the day after he accepted the nomination, about his journeys to Moscow and Peking and hopes of bringing peace to the world if he were given another four years to do it. Lines that he used in 1968 would be used in 1972: moving people from welfare rolls to payrolls; supporting the peace forces against the criminal forces; continual assurances that this is a great country and God's side was the side he was on and wanted the country to stay on, with him. And there he was, the speech finished, standing with Agnew and singing "God Bless America."

A thought that I had in 1968, in this hall, came back. It was that Agnew looks more like a President than Nixon does.

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JULES FEIFFER

SENATOR McGOVERN BELIEVES IN RUNNING AN ELITIST CAMPAIGN.

THAT IS HIS PRIVILEGE. I HAPPEN TO THINK IT IS A MISTAKE.

HE HAS MADE UNWELCOME SOME OF THE ABLEST AND MOST EXPERIENCED MEMBERS OF HIS PARTY.

THAT IS HIS PRIVILEGE. I HAPPEN TO THINK IT IS A MISTAKE.

HE IS RUNNING A CAMPAIGN OF THE ELITE, BY THE ELITE AND FOR THE ELITE.

THAT IS HIS PRIVILEGE. I HAPPEN TO THINK IT IS A MISTAKE.

I BELIEVE ELITISM IN POLITICS DOESN'T BELONG.

SAVE IT FOR GOVERNMENT WHERE IT WORKS!

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Stanley Kauffmann on films

Junior Bonner

(Cinerama)

Marjoe

(Cinema 10)

Sam Peckinpah's ill wind is at least blowing Steve McQueen some good. Peckinpah's career gets increasingly worrisome, but in *Junior Bonner* McQueen gives the first non-merely-star performance of his that I've seen. As usual with a Peckinpah Western, this script (by Jeb Rosebrook) has a hero who is aging—in this case a rodeo writer who already has a limp and is on his way over the hill. McQueen is quiet, concentrated, true: the only really valid element in the film. Even Lucien Ballard's camerawork contributes less than usual.

No one could ever have doubted that McQueen was star material, with his taut Milt Caniff face, polite menace, lean stomach. He has long been an international smash; eight summers ago I woke up one morning in a small French town to read the banner headline on the local daily: *STEVE MC QUEEN A PARIS!* As Junior Bonner he has lost none of his star-light, but this time—surely with Peckinpah's help—he has focused it on something. Instead of lolling on his assets, he is using what he has to understand and present someone else, a man who was *(was)* a young hellion. Stacy Keach, the Shakespeare and Chekhov actor, might take a look at movie-star McQueen's work here to see the kind of central generative imagination that was missing in the *Fat City* pug.

But Peckinpah, with his actors as with his film, is erratic. Ida Lupino is miscast as an Arizona mother; she looks and sounds wrong from beginning to end. (And of course she is hailed with critical rapture: she is English and an old-timer, therefore, this *must* be good acting.) Robert Preston is a likable man whose likableness let him give one of the best phony performances of the postwar era, in that phony musical *The Music Man;* but the phoniness swamps the likableness in the rapscallion old man Bonner. Every Preston inflection sounds like a song cue.

We're awash with rodeo films these days: a few months ago, *J. W. Coop* (poor); soon to appear, *When the Legends Die* (poor, but with a pleasant young Indian actor named Frederic Forrest). In *Junior Bonner* Peckinpah has his own view. He brings his aging hero home for a rodeo in his hometown at the same time that Junior's wandering father returns to raise money in order to leave again. Meanwhile, Junior's brother is prospering plumply here as a real estate developer. Peckinpah is once more rubbing maleness and male mythology against a constricting society. The idea is interesting, but was more effectively, if imperfectly, treated in *The Hired Hand.* Peckinpah has pasted on it all the empty apparatus of the cliché Western: clipped, taciturn, man-to-man dialogue; the sock on the jaw to end a conversation, and the sock later repaid with no hard feelings; and that last infirmity of noble-savage minds, the barroom brawl that everyone just simply loves. Peckinpah even stoops to the corn of having four old men playing cards in the back of the saloon during the brawl, undisturbed by the fracas around them. All that's missing is a close-up of someone being crowned with a bottle and crossing his eyes before he sinks. I don't know how that bit got left out.

The worst thing about a debacle like this film is that it makes a mockery of some of the same methods that the director used well previously. I have seen *The Wild Bunch* again since seeing *The Ballad of Cable Hogue* and *Straw Dogs,* and it keeps its head well above those subsequent flops, but I don't want to see it again for a long, long time after *Junior Bonner.* Peckinpah's eclecticism I could live with. (He has previously borrowed from John Huston; here he borrows from John Ford—the bulldozing scene in *The Grapes of Wrath.*) But the techniques used hollowly here cast a hollow ring backward. I don't want the vapidness of the prismatic cutting and slow-motion violence here to affect their fine use in the earlier film.

Do we need still another argument in the style-content debate? Willy-nilly, Peckinpah supplies it. Style needs content. The opera world proves it over and over again: the surviving works of any one composer are those with the best books, even though he may have composed equally well in other works. Peckinpah has been good when his scripts were simple, mythic rather than moral. He was preachy and arty, and therefore tedious, in *Cable Hogue.* He was pietistic in *Straw Dogs,* which was essentially a remake of Harold Lloyd's *Grandma's Boy* without the laughs but with lashings of sex and gore.

It looks as if Peckinpah has been listening to his critics. I wish he'd listen to this one and get back to Laurentian blood. He doesn't have much range, but at least he's at home on it. He looks silly with conventional moral frameworks; they make his violence look like sadistic decadence instead of feral outburst. And he's too unruly to make the neat sentimental film that *Junior Bonner* might have been in other hands.

Is *cinema-vérité* as easy as it looks? Is it as unveracious as it looks? From *Marjoe,* at least, both questions get a ringing yes. This is a "documentary" about an evangelist named Marjoe Gortner who started as a California child and has been hell-raising most of the time since then. I put quotations around documentary because some of the prayer meetings we see were held especially to be filmed. The material is utterly familiar from fiction films on the same subject. Marjoe's frankness, off-pulpit, is occasioned by the fact that he is quitting evangelism. Both the evangelism and the frankness are interwoven with facile sophomoric smartness by the filmmakers, Howard Smith and Sarah Kernochan.

The film is very repetitious. We get the point long before they stop intercutting shots of people in religious ecstasy with shots of Marjoe counting the take. Further, the film is blind. It tells us, clearly enough, that there is some truth in Marjoe as well as hypocrisy; but, much more important, it is blind to the fact that he didn't cheat his congregations. (This film, if those people see it, will make them feel cheated, not the prayer meetings themselves.) Marjoe didn't cheat his congregations any more than Mick Jagger cheats his audiences when he sends them into comparable ecstasies by shouting and moaning about his broken heart when, in fact, his heart may not be broken and he, too, is doing it for the money. The function of revivalist religion in America, much discussed by historians, is close to that of the Stones and the Beatles, even somewhat related to Sinatra and Vallee before them. While I was watching *Marjoe,* I thought of Bernard Shaw's remark that, come the revolution, he would make theaters free and would charge admis-

(continued on page 36)

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Crawford Woods on tv

Hamlet or Pizza?

Back from England. In five months abroad I went through three stages of life with Auntie as the BBC is affectionately called there: stunned disbelief that television could be so good, delight that I could watch nearly every night without shame, and finally boredom with the riches that made my pleasure possible. So I was not eager to feel the shock in reverse, to go from boredom to numbness to amazement at so much darkness.

Still, upon getting home I turned on once or twice. An episode of "McCloud" looked reasonably nasty and gritty, justifying a year-old guess that it might not only be one of last season's survivors, but a plausible attempt to restore some gutter accent to the small screen. New York and Texas were refreshing after those Oxbridge voices. (It sometimes seemed to me in London that the masculine lilts recounting a Belfast horror could at any moment lapse into a set piece from *Lady Windermere's Fan.)* I also watched a few minutes of "Sanford and Son," which, like "All In The Family," is a BBC transplant; it has black actors and a lot of up-to-date ghetto dialogue, but left me with the feeling that the times just aren't right for a remake of "Amos and Andy."

Also some good coverage of the flood, net and local. A couple of old movies. The limit of my off-duty viewing.

None of this, even where it gave pleasure, could fight through the flak of commercials with any real conviction. You have to be away from the selling for awhile to relearn just how abrasive it really is. Returning, I could only feel the truism that TV exists to sell things, or in other words that commercials are the *essence* of TV. I felt like the man from Mars who concluded that automobiles were the dominant form of life on earth, since whole cultures seemed dedicated to their care and propagation.

I'm lining up these ideas—and they're ideas of which I'm reasonably fond, though it's easy enough to identify them as part of the snob-intellectual TV critic's standard kit—partly to thank my mildewed Panasonic for its sturdy if shoddy welcome home, and partly to set them up to be branded as crap by a writer who recently decided that all these bleats for Better Television are not only feeble but misdirected.

The author is Martin Mayer, and the branding iron is his book *About Television* (Harper & Row; $10.00). As writing, it's no great shakes—Mayer is an indifferent stylist at best, and given to bouts of hysteria when faced with an unwelcome view—but as writing about television it is close to an adequate one-book library on the subject, though you have to do a bit of opinion-sifting to get at the facts. He has some serious blind spots, particularly about all the possibilities for Better Television, and he sometimes seems to contradict himself: for example, he dislikes cable because it will make people stay home at night, then later notes that commercial television is already far along the road to accomplishing the same thing; and he scorns PBS's "Great American Dream Machine" as sophomoric, but has good words for Flip Wilson. Yet this final note may be less a contradiction than the essence of his case, as we shall see.

Mayer is brief and lucid on a lot of the historical and technical detail of his subject, but his focal points are the appropriate ones: sports, specials, news and documentaries, successful series, children's television, local TV, cable and public television. It is particularly with the issues of "serious" shows that he is, it seems to me, strong and sensible. But he is not a Believer.

For PBS itself, for example, where the serious show is the hope of the world, Mayer has much sympathy but not much confidence. His vision of television is of the big three, and he does not dodge the conclusions that drives him to: that we are becoming a nation of housebound, desensitized, homogenized consumers of cheapjack goods sold by brainless entertainment. No, damn it, I'm falling back into old habits with those last two adjectives. Mayer puts it better:

> It seems to me that television has only minimal obligations to an author and music critic living in New York. . . . The decision to kill "Hee Haw" and "Family Affair," however—both of them shows I was physically unable to watch for more than about five minutes—seemed to me truly inexcusable. Here . . . CBS took cherished entertainment away from country people who had few other available pleasures.

Inside all this apparent snobbery may rest a home truth, infrequently spoken, that should lay the ghost of Better Television once and for all: did you *really* like Dr. Kildare as Hamlet? The book cites this testimony of a critic of the 1959-60 season:

> A New Yorker could see *Medea* as filtered through Robinson Jeffers . . . *The Tempest,* Ibsen's *Doll House* and *Master Builder,* Strindberg's *Miss Julie,* Chekov's *Cherry Orchard* . . . original plays by Archibald MacLeish . . . adaptations of stories or novels by Cervantes, Dickens, Turgenev, Conrad, James, Faulkner, Maugham, Hemingway, Sinclair Lewis, and many, many others including the authors of the Bible. *Sub specie aeternitatis,* everything was lousy.

The same shows done by the BBC would, odds are, not have been lousy. This is not rampant Anglophilia. The BBC can be boring as a banana. But there is a tradition there of quality television able to be heedless of quantity audience, and we simply don't have it. Our television came out of radio, and our radio came off a soapbox with the soapflakes still inside.

There is of course a counter argument to the modest proposal that we be content with the airwaves as a garbage dump, and it is well put by Richard Hoggart in one of the book's swamp of epigrams. "The strongest objection to the more trivial popular entertainments is not that they prevent their readers from becoming highbrow, but that they make it harder for people without an intellectual bent to become wise their own way." To be willing that network television continue as it is, is to be willing that the majority of Americans be stultified in their tastes and supported in their ignorance. But to ask for more is to make the networks responsible for things outside their province. Isn't it?

"All the English-language theater worth preserving since *Gammer Gurton's Needle* would not fill 5 percent of the time the networks must program each year," Mayer concludes. "Fretting about the average level of television is like complaining about old age." Network

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TV is the big time, it's where the money and audience are and always will be. Not only will be, but should be, for to Mayer, TV is "heaven on earth" to the multitudes deprived of a reasonable life in their work or art. He approvingly quotes a former FCC commissioner:

> The more I see of television, the more I dislike and defend it. Television is not for me, but for many others who do like it . . . the literature of the illiterate, the culture of the lowbrow, the wealth of the poor, the privilege of the underprivileged, the exclusive club of the excluded masses.

It is no arrogance to suggest that these terms may not apply to Mr. Mayer, you, or me; and therefore we're going to have to do a bit better with this subject or confess that we are taking an inappropriate proprietary interest in something that belongs to somebody else. My own solution is a little schizophrenic but I have no hesitation in recommending it. I propose to ignore the network product much of the time, but keep a weather eye for the rare good show and sing its praises when it appears; to lock onto trends, problems, promises that might be of interest to people who would usually rather read than view; to forget and forgive the rest on the Mayer principle that people have some kind of mystic absolute right to junk if they happen to be junkies; and to give aid and comfort to the enemy—PBS, cassette/cable, and the outlaw bands of video nuts. Let today's gesture of support be furnished by a particularly delightful epigram from *About Television*, a sign on the refrigerator in the lunchroom at WTOG-TV in Tampa: PLEASE DO NOT TOUCH THE SALADS OR THE PIZZA. THEY ARE FOR A COMMERCIAL.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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When West Was Wister

My Dear Wister: The Frederic Remington-Owen Wister Letters

by Ben Merchant Vorpahl

(American West Publishing Co., 599 College Ave., Palo Alto, Calif. 94306; $9.95)

Wnen Huck Finn declared that he was going to light out for the Territory, he was speaking of the area beyond Arkansas and Missouri, the present states of Oklahoma and Kansas, as it existed in the 1840s. He was expressing the wanderlust of all Americans, for whom the westering urge had held, like the trade winds, for more than two centuries, but he was expressing in particular Mark Twain's own discontent with "civilization," the strictures and structure of the eastern establishment as opposed to the open, untrammeled spaces and freedom of the western territories. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is set in the 1840s, but it was written in the '70s and '80s, and the meaning of that final declaration gains a certain dimension thereby, for the frontier was fast closing in and closing down as well. And Mark Twain was not alone in his nostalgic reaction to the complexities of emerging Modern America. Even as it closed, the western frontier was sought by an avid trio which was to create the popular image of what the West was all about, a compound of cowboys, cavalry, and cussed Injuns: Owen Wister, Frederic Remington and Theodore Roosevelt.

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn was published in 1885, and it was in that same year that young Owen Wister took a train trip to the Wyoming Territory for his health. The son of Philadelphia gentry and the grandson of Fanny Kemble, Wister had graduated from Harvard with hopes of a career in music. He had been encouraged in this ambition by the praise of Franz Liszt during a post-graduate tour of Europe, but family pressure had forced him into a business career and the study of law. Freud would have recognized the "nervous ailment" which resulted in Wister's trip west: like Huck Finn, he had sickened of civilization and lit out for the only remaining territory. His first western journey eventually led to Wister's writing the book that has become, with all its faults, the "classic" western novel —*The Virginian.*

It was in 1885 also that Frederic Remington made a decisive trip to the Far West. A native of upstate New York who had attended Yale until family reversals made him withdraw, Remington like Wister had artistic ambitions. But art as she was taught (in a basement) at Yale in the late 19th century did not satisfy him, and as Wister enjoyed the Harvard curriculum less than club life and amateur theatricals (while graduating *magna cum laude),* so the burly Remington got his greatest satisfaction from playing on the Yale football team captained by Walter Camp. Entering college the same year as Wister, he lasted only a year. His father's death and his mother's displeasure with his artistic leanings were but two of several reasons, but the result was a restless period of wandering about from job to job. By 1882, when Wister was touring Europe and enjoying Wagner's operas, Remington had drifted as far west as Peabody, Kan. He bought a mule ranch with some of the money left him by his father, but soon found that ranching was pretty much like any other business and to hell with it. He sold his ranch in 1884 and headed "somewhere else," this time to the Southwest. He apparently had no definite plan, but he did a considerable amount of sketching in the field, amateurish but energetic drawings which contain all the essentials but none of the craft of his later work. Returning to Kansas City, Remington was able to sell some of the paintings based on his sketches, and though he was swindled out of his patrimony by owners of a saloon he had invested in, the loss was less a setback than the cutting of familial apron strings. He returned to New York only long enough to marry the girl who was waiting for him, and then headed west again to Arizona.

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Though Remington and Wister both went west in 1885, they went separately, in more ways than one. Of the two, it was Remington who most resembled Huck Finn, whose personality was most easily accommodated to the western mood, and who, early on, had determined that his future would be tied up with an artistic record of the last frontier. Wister, on the other hand, went west for his health, not for material, and had no idea of becoming a "western" writer. It would be hard to think of a less likely candidate for that office than the dilettantish dude who was escorted to Wyoming by two maiden aunts in 1885. Still, his daily journal (edited in part by his daughter and published in 1958 as *Owen Wister Out West)* recorded a surprisingly positive reaction: the scenery struck him as monotonous but "beautiful," and reminded him "of the northern part of Spain," and a nighttime scene recalled "*Die Walküre*—this which is much more than my most romantic dream could have hoped." He wasn't at all surprised, he wrote, that "a man never comes back after he has once been here for a few years." Yet he only stayed a couple of months himself, and when he returned to Boston, he went back to Harvard Law School as well, and though he began to have some success at writing, his pieces in the *Atlantic* were on "The Greek Play" and "Republican Opera."

Wister went west again in the summer of 1887, but once again returned to law school in Philadelphia. In 1888, he took another western vacation, and returned home to finish his degree and set up a law practice. He also worked on an opera about Montezuma, a subject only remotely connected with Wyoming, but when another bout of bad health sent him west in the fall of 1889, he returned with notes for the stories which were to make him famous, and his next trip in the summer of 1891 was, like Remington's journey in 1885, with the stated intention "to jot down all shreds of local colour and all conversations and anecdotes decent or otherwise that strike me as native wild flowers. After a while I shall write a great fat book about the whole thing." The "fat book" eluded him for the time being, and the "whole thing" seems never to have come within his grasp, but that fall his first western stories, "Hank's Woman" and "How Lin McLean Went East," were published by *Harper's*. They established him quickly as a western writer, but as their titles suggest, Wister's West (like that of Bret Harte) was from the very beginning an extension of eastern attitudes. Wister noted with relief in his earliest journals that "every man, woman, and cowboy I see comes from the East—and generally from New England, thank goodness." Lin McLean was just such a cowboy, and though his trip back home ended in disgust over eastern narrowness, the cycle of his western adventures (published as *Lin McLean* in 1895) ended in a proper marriage, symbol of western accommodation to eastern ideals of order.

Considering the importance of marriage to the ending of *The Virginian*, Wister in a number of his short stories betrays a surprising element of misogyny, and there are other signs that his use of the marriage theme was the result of mixed motives. Molly Stark, the heroine of *The Virginian*, took her first name from that of Wister's own bride, and the idyllic honeymoon in the novel was based on Wister's also. The largely feminine readership of *Harper's* (where Wister's books were serialized) was another factor, as was the blue pencil of its editor, Henry Mills Alden, but perhaps the greatest influence shaping Wister's West, responsible for the taming process by which his realistic journal entries became romantic fiction, was Wister's good friend and fellow Harvard graduate, Theodore Roosevelt. Wister was not always comfortable with Roosevelt's progressive politics (and lived long enough to die loathing the even more progressive Roosevelt of the '30s), but the old school tie was strong and his respect for the man was great. Though he didn't always follow Roosevelt's literary advice, he accepted it, and was affected likewise by the sheer magnetism of the man. What Howells was to Mark Twain, Roosevelt was to Wister, not so much a literary censor as a moral mentor, whose force of personality shaped the final bias of the other man's work.

Roosevelt, like Andrew Jackson, William Henry Harrison, Ulysses S. Grant and a score of sundry other Indian killers and filibusterers, had made political capital out of his own wilderness campaign, and not a little literary capital also. Having graduated from Harvard three years before Wister, he preceded him west as well, following a sequence of personal and political disasters. From 1883 to 1887 he raised beef and his own muscles in Dakota Territory, affecting a legendary transformation and fixing a useful political image. Though his western enterprise ended in the disastrous winter of 1886-87, the books he wrote upon returning east, along with his complementary philosophy of "the strenuous life," promoted a popular idea of the West as a perpetual preserve of high-minded adventure. Even before he became Wister's literary adviser, Roosevelt's *Ranch Life and the Hunting Trail* (1891) helped to create an eastern market for the western idea—so long as that idea was suitable to eastern tastes.

Roosevelt's book was illustrated by Remington, whose fortunes were on the rise by the early '90s, and when Wister's "Hank's Woman" appeared in *Harper's Weekly*, the same issue carried part of a series by Remington on the Sioux uprising which resulted in the Battle of Wounded Knee, and it was only a matter of time before Alden would assign him to illustrate one of Wister's stories. This was "Balaam and Pedro," first printed in 1893 and one of the early stories which were to be transformed into the narrative of *The Virginian*. It was this story, with its eye-gouging incident, which provided the first occasion of a real difference of opinion between Roosevelt and Wister, one in which Roosevelt finally persevered—a decisive victory. Remington and Wister met while the story was still in press, and though Wister at first was

Because

because
death is so lovely
so self-possessed
we have a tendency
to jump the gun
before the molecule's dissolution
the final bad breath

because
death is a communicable disease
only childless men
can commit suicide
without setting a time bomb
in the fragile cabins
of their children

and because
death is so attractive in the abstract
a rest
freedom from pain
we should bite our lips to remember
it doesn't taste good
and it leaves a stain

PETER MEINKE

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reluctant to accept Remington's offers to collaborate, a circumstantial incident convinced him that the success of his story was due in large part to the illustration. The result was nearly a decade of teamwork, a partnership which also had its effect on the direction of Wister's writing.

In the triangular relationship of Roosevelt-Remington-Wister, the artist seems to have been the odd man out. Roosevelt and Remington never had more than a casual, professional acquaintance, and though the politician admired the artist's work and commissioned the famous (and fictitious) picture of the storming of San Juan Hill, Roosevelt would have found the earthy Remington a trifle too coarse for his tastes. Wister too seems to have kept his collaborator out of his personal life, yet Remington, through his illustrations, linked his name firmly to those two good friends. And though all three contributed their share to the crystallization of the popular idea of the cowboy, the greatest of all American folk heroes, it was Remington's paintings and statues which were the pictorial harbinger of that medium responsible for our present-day notions of the West, a West singularly deficient in just those qualities of moral decency which Roosevelt and Wister together promoted. There are no women save squaws in Remington's paintings, and the only marriage he ever celebrated was that hybrid union of beast and man which produced the celibate centaur of our national mythology. Like Virgil, Remington portrayed arms and the man, and his themes were always violent.

Several years ago, G. Edward White wrote a penetrating study of the efforts of Roosevelt and Wister to establish a synthesis between western rugged independence and eastern habits of order, a "consensus" West that had as its twin paradigms the Rough Riders and *The Virginian*. The coming together in a heroic bond in Cuba of eastern dudes and western cowboys showed that Americans *were* Americans, for all o' that, and when the Virginian married a daughter of New England in the Far West and then went on to make a fortune from his coal lands, why that was reassuring also. Frederick Jackson Turner once wrote that the Captain of Industry was the Old Frontiersman in new guise, and he may very well have had *The Virginian* in mind; but in any event Turner was an important spokesman for the idea of consensus, of the ultimate good to come from the marriage of East and West. Not so Remington, for whom the East and the West were unreconcilable opposites. Instead of viewing the West as a transforming arena, he regarded it as an evanescent phenomenon, like the great desert itself, rugged in appearance but as delicate an ecostructure as a frail cactus flower. The West and the East he saw as worlds apart, and the invasion of the one by the other spelt doom for the last territory of freedom. Alone of the eastern trio, in this as in all other ways, Remington seems to have escaped his heritage almost completely. Perhaps because he came from the upstate New York area which produced Leatherstocking, a country still woodsy enough to evoke a wilderness, Remington was actually able to make the psychic leap proposed by Huckleberry Finn. Lighting out for the vanishing territory of 1885, in a sense he never came back, and his early death in 1909 was as symbolic as Wister's bitter, alienated old age.

Given these psychological and cultural antagonisms, the relationship between Remington and Wister could only have been a sort of uneasy truce, producing a collaborative tension which was suggested but not spelled out in White's study of the three men. Ben Merchant Vorpahl has now written a book which does spell it out, a study which is central to an understanding of what the West, as a literary idea, is all about. Vorpahl occasionally snarls his interweaving relationships (it is not always easy to determine who was doing what when and where), and to my mind he is guilty of occasional overstatements in the service of his thesis. But I say this only to emphasize the positive, because I have not had the pleasure of reading such a well-written, graceful, and even witty treatment of popular culture—which often attracts jargon-laden sociological silliness—in a long time.

Vorpahl is clearly up to as well as on to his subject, and the real subject of his book is Frederic Remington, who comes across in his letters to Wister as a slangy, profane, earthy, gourmandizing, woman-fearing, fat American boy—a 300-pound Huckleberry. Toward the end of this book, I began to sorrow that Remington was never called upon to illustrate Mark Twain's classic. His habits of mind, even his wry turn of phrase, constantly bring Twain to mind, and it seems a shame that somewhere along the way the two great nostalgists did not collaborate. It is clear that they belong to the same camp, the Red Man tribe as opposed to the White Man club which both Philip Rahv and Leslie Fiedler (for different reasons) have defined as the chief split of sensibility in American literature.

Wister, of course, belonged to the White Men, and Vorpahl's study suggests that the relationship between the two men resembled that uneasy friendship between Hawthorne and Melville. Though Remington's artistry was essentially flawed by his mixed motives, and though Wister's craft was similarly marred by commercial and cultural considerations, both men did have ambitions to excel in their chosen fields. The eventual fate of their relationship therefore leads us to consider the fate of American literature as well as the fate of the American West, and such a consideration leads us to the inescapable conclusion that the fate of American literature *was* the fate of the American West, at least so far as the 19th century is concerned. Vorpahl's book is therefore an important additional chapter to Edwin Fussell's *Frontier* and Henry Nash Smith's *Virgin Land*.

As his hyphenated subtitle indicates, Vorpahl relies heavily on the Remington-Wister correspondence preserved in the Wister archive in the Library of Con-

SUPPRESSED REALITY

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gress, which hyphenate should read "Remington-to-Wister," because the correspondence is decidedly one-sided. While Wister had a strong sense of his importance and saved all his received correspondence, his manuscripts and related documents, Remington like Melville was a "burner," and even went so far in his last, reclusive years as to destroy many of his most famous canvases. Few if any letters from Wister to him survive, and Vorpahl has had to rely on Wister's letters to his mother (he wrote regularly to her as long as she lived), to his other associates, and on his western journals for material with which to balance the account. Moreover, Remington was a terse even cryptic though exuberant correspondent, and Vorpahl has had to do a painstaking job of research to determine, often, just what in hell he was talking about in his letters. What Remington did not say is often more important than what he discussed, and the resemblance to Melville's correspondence to Hawthorne is more than superficial.

Like Melville, Remington was the one who did most of the pushing, again and again extending futile invitations to Wister to come "up" for a visit. But this one-sidedness took a sudden reversal once Remington began to cast his future fame in bronze and think of abandoning illustration and painting forever. It seems quite clear that Remington's interest in Wister was dictated by professional not personal considerations, that Wister's stories created opportunities for illustration and income. Throughout, Remington indulges in heavy-handed kidding about Wister's unlikely role as western writer, and his remarks about the ephemeral nature of print and paper were similarly pointed. Wister, for his part, seems to have remained rather condescending toward his partner, regarding him as a "mere" illustrator, until that talk about bronze and immortality began. Wister then turned suitor, but it was too late. By then certain troublesome matters of collaboration had gone awry, and the never more than imperfect sympathies between two thin-skinned artists quickly soured.

The partnership ended virtually on the eve of the publication of *The Virginian*, and Remington did not illustrate Wister's famous book. He had, however, illustrated a number of the stories from which the novel was derived, and Vorpahl makes it abundantly clear that Wister's slow drift (under the genteel influence of what Remington called "upholstery of a library chair," referring to

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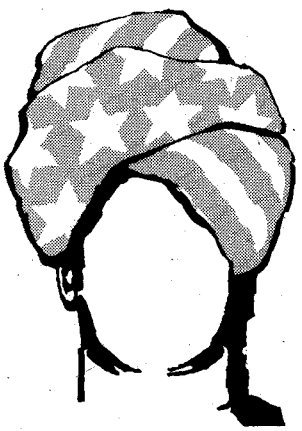

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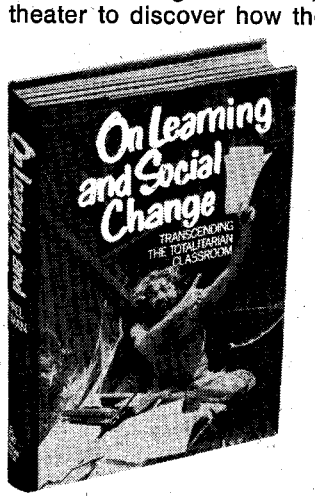

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eastern editors) toward an easternized, school-marmalade West contributed greatly to the estrangement. Like Roosevelt, Wister was from the beginning a latter-day Parkman, a romantic historian of the West, who knew better than he wrote and used his journal material to structure a consensus West—a territory of the mind. Remington, though at the outset a realist, became increasingly withdrawn and mystical as the West that he had known disappeared. *His* West, that is to say, became a territory of the heart.

But until this drift separated the two men, there was nearly a decade of often intense collaboration of artist and writer, one which transcended the usual relationship. If Roosevelt held Wister in a thrall of personality, Remington too had his attractions, and though it was Remington who paid court to Wister, it was the writer who seems to have been the chief beneficiary of the arrangement. The main purpose of Vorpahl's study is to demonstrate the deeper literary aspects of the Remington-Wister partnership, aspects which have hitherto been unknown, and what emerges is, like the correspondence, one-sided. First, there is the extent of Wister's indebtedness to Remington for "material," for like Wister's journal, Remington was crammed full of firsthand western experience. Thus Wister's early and important essay, "The Evolution of the Cowboy," is shown to have been indebted to the artist for far more than its illustrations. Secondly, Vorpahl demonstrates that Wister had an ideational (ideological might be a better word) debt as well. Not only the facts and anecdotes in "The Evolution of the Cowboy" were borrowed from Remington, but the main thesis as well, a thesis which was twisted out of a Remington essay, "The Horse of the Plains," and which became the main ontological support of *The Virginian*.

It was Wister's idea, an early manifestation of his chauvinistic Anglophilia, that the cowboy was a last avatar of the old Anglo-Saxon spirit, a veritable knight of the prairie. That the real cowboy was as often Negro or Irish or Swedish as English in his origins did not hinder Wister, any more than the presence of two black regiments in the Cuban campaign darkened Roosevelt's white-on-white "consensus." The posterity of Wister and Roosevelt is necessarily clouded by the outright bigotry of the one and the politically veiled but undeniable racist notions of the other. Remington was even more guilty in this regard, and his letters are filled with "hebes" and "dagos" and "niggers," nor did he ever take the opportunity to celebrate the passing of the black cowboy. But so far as "The Evolution" is concerned, Wister's indebtedness to him concerns an essay in which Remington's racism is, if anything, sublimated. The point of "The Horse of the Plains" was that the animal that made the cowboy such a significant figure was essentially the horse of the Spanish conquistadores, the Arabian Barbary, or "Barb." Conquistadore, vaquero, Indian, cowboy—all western men rode the same mount, and Remington's illustrations supposedly demonstrated this neohippean nongenesis.

As Wister begged and borrowed cowboy etymologies and like data from Remington, so did he pirate his Barbary thesis, for his theory of the "pure" Anglo-Saxon cowboy was obviously derived from the thesis about the "pure" Barbary strain—that is, he substituted the Anglo-Saxon knight for the Arabian horse. Remington knew that Wister's thesis was so much wishful thinking, but since their partnership had just begun and was important to him, he kept quiet and did the illustrations required of him—even a mawkish "The Last Cavalier," which shows a cowboy riding along against a ghostly backdrop of knightly, Anglo-Saxon predecessors. So antithetical was this subject to Remington's own conceptions and techniques (his skies, as Vorpahl points out, are western: big and empty) that it is clearly an inferior picture, and yet its original seems to have been the only recorded acquisition of Remington's work by Wister. Though it was untypical of the painter, the subject matter was endemic to the writer's view of history; it helped provide the subsequent rationale for the distortions of form and fact that went into the writing of *The Virginian*.

Still, the evolution of Wister's ultimate cowboy was a slow, ten-year metamorphosis. His earliest stories, the ones which Remington illustrated, were among his most realistic, and so long as Wister stuck fairly close to his journals and his recollections, Remington was delighted to illustrate them. But as the character of the Virginian gradually began to evolve from a slangy, simple, even comic cowpoke to a version of flowering knighthood, Remington became less comfortable. In time he grew resentful of having to depict a West and a cowboy which had become a creation of an eastern sensibility. At about this point in their joint career, Remington

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began to write short stories himself, and though he may have been Wister's inferior in this regard, there is no doubt but that the West he wrote about was the tragic and evanescent ground of his not Wister's imagination. Vorpahl demonstrates, in fact, that Remington's stories are a tacit argument, a quiet rebuttal.

Like Wister, Remington began by writing a series of short stories concerning one character, "Sundown LeFlare," a half-breed cowboy and scout who tells his stories in a heavy dialect to the narrator, a convention which Wister relied on also. But where all of Wister's white heroes make their separate peace with the regulating, marriage-and-business-oriented spirit of the East, Sundown LeFlare is at heart a renegade, a picaro, an illiterate "breed." Wister also wrote admiringly of the Indian, but as the title of his first collection of stories, *Red Men and White*, suggests, the union for him was never more than conterminous. For Remington, the mixture of bloods was catalytic and fated, and Vorpahl makes clear enough the antagonisms—between East and West and Wister and Remington—which went into the creation of Sundown LeFlare.

These antagonisms are even more obvious in Remington's novel, *John Ermine of the Yellowstone*, published late in the same year that *The Virginian* appeared, and obviously written as a response to that book. *John Ermine* is a minor work of art but a major indeed initiatory stage in an important subliterary genre, the latter-day recrudescence of noble savagery with a distinctly Nietzschean twist which resulted in such disparate novels as Jack London's *Call of the Wild*, Ernest Thompson Seton's *Two Little Savages* and Cyrus Townsend Brady's *The Island of Regeneration*, and which is epitomized by Burroughs' *Tarzan of the Apes*. Vorpahl does not discuss the possibility of this genesis, but surely the story of a noble and titled Englishman who is orphaned in the jungle but survives to rule over all animate nature red in tooth and claw, and who returns eventually to England to resume the station and duties which he has inherited (only to return finally to the jungle), though containing obvious suggestions of Wister's Anglo-Saxon cowboy thesis, is actually closer to *John Ermine*.

Where Tarzan is adopted by "anthropoid apes," Ermine is kidnapped by Indians, and grows up in savage surroundings. Eventually he is reclaimed by a hermit of the mountains, a white recluse who takes it upon himself to teach the young boy the ways of his people. Growing to young manhood, John Ermine goes to live among other white men, as a scout for a cavalry troop. There he meets and falls in love with a daughter of one of the senior officers, the consensual theme. But though he is white, handsome and as blonde as a Viking, John Ermine is a savage at heart, not an English gentleman, and his rejection by the girl results in a vengeful finale which ends with his death—by the hand of an Indian he insulted. By means of his fable, Remington hoped to disprove Wister's thesis, deny the consensus interpretation, and lay to rest that old romantic trope of a noble-blooded hero in rags. It was a large order, and as the popularity of *The Virginian* and *Tarzan* suggests, he was not successful in carrying it out.

Though *John Ermine* was well received and went through several printings, it never matched the éclat of *The Virginian*. Even Henry James admired Wister's novel, though with a few telling reservations. James praised the characters and setting of *The Virginian*, but did not much like the ending. In his stories of Americans abroad, James had revealed his own disinclination to arrive at consensus. He refused to provide the marriage in *The American* which Howells begged him to include, and in *Daisy Miller* he gave his rustic little heroine a tragic death in Rome. James wanted Wister's hero to have the same fate: "I should have made him perish in his flower and in some splendid and somber way." Though James did not read and perhaps could not have read Remington's novel, he certainly would have found there an ending to his liking.

For James and Remington, in their far different ways, both belong to that odd fraternity founded by Cooper and continued by Melville and Mark Twain, that tradition in American literature which regards innocence and savagery as not permanent and enduring but fragile and fleeting qualities. If *John Ermine* throws a different perspective on *The Virginian*, it likewise illuminates the western implications of Billy Budd (who also "perishes in his flower") and suggests what might have happened had Huck Finn managed to get West and have those wild adventures amongst the Injuns. For all its faults, *John Ermine* is one of the missing links of American literature, and Ben Vorpahl is to be thanked for providing us with the details of its genesis.

John Seelye

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Two GOP Dissenters

O Congress

by Donald Riegle
(with Trevor Armbrister)

(Doubleday; $7.95)

Catch the Falling Flag: A Republican's Challenge to His Party

by Richard J. Whalen

(Houghton Mifflin; $6.95)

These two books are by Republicans, about Republicans, and (mostly) for Republicans, but they contain some morsels that Democrats and independents will want to munch on too. Donald Riegle is a third-term congressman from Flint, Mich., whose book is plugged as an "intimate diary of life on Capitol Hill." Richard J. Whalen is a former speechwriter for Richard Nixon, a freelance journalist and the author of *The Founding Father*, a biography of Joseph P. Kennedy. For different reasons both authors have become disillusioned with the Grand Old Party and its incumbent standard bearer, and tell why with differing degrees of success.

I wanted to read *O Congress* because of the favorable impression Riegle made before an audience of conventioneers in Detroit last April. Called in at the last minute to cover for Democrat John Conyers, Riegle succeeded in turning the audience's disappointment at losing the keynote speaker into a political version of "A Star Is Born." Although so young-looking and hirsute that he looked more like someone's staff aide than the congressman from Flint (since 1967, no less!) he gave a damned good speech, a rip-roaring confession of his black sheep standing within the Republican Party, the reasons why the President has shunned him (the parallel was drawn with Charlie Goodell) and a taste of his soon-to-be-published book that would expose the inadequacies of both the Congress and his party. The audience rewarded his pinch-hitting with a standing ovation.

Unfortunately, the book does not measure up to expectations. Condensed from 4000 pages of material dictated or written by Riegle over a one-year period, it is structurally a swamp. His assistant Trevor Armbrister must have made a valiant effort to get the thing together, but like those fashionable books of instant sociology, it remains overburdened with the shortcomings of ordinary speech. As a diarist a Pepys the congressman is not.

Nor does he have that much to say about Congress. There is some warmed-over haranguing about the seniority system and committee work, the ineffectiveness of Congress, the failure of the Republicans to capture even one house under Nixon. One gets the feeling that Riegle doesn't like what he's doing, primarily because of the compromises that have to be made. Characteristically he says, "winning is losing. Either the compromises you have to make to achieve your goal wind up destroying you or you find when you finally reach that goal that it's far too late to do anything about the issues that used to motivate you." I think the reader can go elsewhere for an analysis of the limitations of incremental change.

Does *O Congress* go beyond the normal campaign literature reviled in the book as "sanctimonious puff jobs"? I think not. One gets the feeling that Riegle is trying to be overly intimate with the reader. There are constant references to his heroism in battling the party regulars; he seems intent on making it perfectly clear that he won't be intimidated by the possible reverberations the book may cause, and seems to delight in telling the gory details of who picks his nose on the House floor. But he skirts around the tough issues when it is convenient for him to do so. His discussion of school busing, surely the hottest item on the Michigan political menu last year, hardly displays the gutsy approach Riegle would like to have us believe he brings to social issues.

The most valuable part of the book is Riegle's discussion of his involvement in the aborted McCloskey presidential challenge. There can be little wonder why Riegle would be attracted to McCloskey and repulsed by Nixon (Nixon went so far as to refuse to permit the national cystic fibrosis child to be photographed with him until Riegle withdrew his association with the request—the child was from Riegle's district), but personal animosities like this only underscore Riegle's (and McCloskey's) main reason for falling out with the President: Nixon's handling of the war. Both thought in 1968 that Nixon really did have a plan to end the war, and three years later their disillusionment led to the insurgent movement to dump Nixon that never really got off the ground. What I cannot understand, what the book has not demonstrated to my satisfaction, is why Riegle hasn't pulled a Lindsay. He has good labor support, a liberal voting record, vehemently opposes the war and is hardly enthralled with Republican policies on domestic affairs. Perhaps after November 7 the voters in Flint will have given him cause to reconsider his position.

There is no danger that Richard J. Whalen is a secret Democrat. Throughout his masterfully written text he takes every opportunity to swipe at Kennedy-type liberals, law-and-order softies and those who would diminish the power of America's defensive system. In the sense that it is good to know thine enemy, I think it is instructive for liberals to read what Whalen has to say. He pounds out a tight-fisted brief against knee-jerk liberalism while avoiding the snotty snideness of a William Buckley or the overbearing self-confidence of a Kevin Phillips.

Whalen was one of Nixon's bright young men, the new breed of professionals who were brought in during his campaign for President to inundate the candidate with clever ideas. For a while his counsel was taken, but as the campaign progressed Whalen realized that the kingpins in the road show were not the issue-oriented writers, but the technicians and media men. The technocrats were interested only in images; so for that matter was the candidate. Like Riegle, Whalen split over the war. He had written a speech that Nixon was to have given on March 31, 1968. It was of course pre-empted by President Johnson's abdication address, and after-

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wards Nixon never used Whalen's material, never told the American people how he planned to bring peace to Southeast Asia (has he yet?). By the time the convention was sewn up for Nixon, Whalen realized that he could no longer be effective with men like John Mitchell heading the cast. He packed up and bolted Miami.

Don't put Whalen down for sour grapes. Whalen is concerned about the future of his party, and he is even more troubled that Richard Nixon, the man who resurrected the GOP from the ashes of the Goldwater debacle, may be contributing to its ultimate downfall. By surrounding himself with so-called professionals like John Ehrlichman and Bob Haldeman ("the Germans"), Nixon has effectively shut off the presidency from the people and their representatives. He has in Whalen's eyes proven to be an ineffective leader, adopting opposition platforms on domestic matters simply because he seems to have no ideas of his own. The Republican Party under Nixon, Whalen feels, has abandoned its principles of individual freedom and limited, responsive government. "The flag, as a symbol of these ideals, is falling, and I have written to hasten the arrival of the courageous leadership needed to catch and raise it," he says in conclusion.

As a Democrat I look at the Republican Party's ideals as stated by Whalen in a different light, but I share equally his concern about what is going to happen to the country if we have Nixon beating us around for another four years.

Robert Cassidy

Up-To-Date in Kansas City

The Confessions of a Child of the Century

by Thomas Rogers

(Simon & Schuster; $7.95)

Samuel Heather, author of the novel within this novel, was born in 1930 and ". . . actuarially speaking I am due to cease upon the midnight with no pain at the beginning of the year 2000 . . ." hence the title. Heather is, pardon me in advance, a son of a bishop. But credit Thomas Rogers that although he sets up that musty gag by making his hero the male child of the Episcopalian bishop of Kansas City, he never comes right out and says it until the very end. Nor, in fact, does he use gags per se at all, yet he has managed to write a book so filled with comedy that the covers should bulge.

In 1968, Thomas Rogers' first novel, *The Pursuit of Happiness*, was a rather surprising nominee for the National Book Award, surprising both because of the plain-faced humanity of an over-40 novelist writing about young graduate students, and because of the poignant comedy in it, at a time of brutal national wrenchings. In this new book he goes against the grain again and writes a tale that is clean, sentimental, simple and, though irreverent, politely so. It's an intentional anachronism. Here's Samuel on his early home life, paterfamilias in particular:

> Father was bishop of Kansas City. "What is it like to have a bishop for a father?" people ask. Well, it's hell. Most fathers are terrible (most sons are terrible too) but a bishop father is worse than most. He is a professional father. His diocese is his family. He delivers homilies and distributes advice. He gets into the habit of being a father, whereas most fathers are fatherly only on occasion. Their daily work is to be businessmen or dentists or farmers. My father's daily work was to be a father. It was excruciating.
>
> Dinners had the mixed character of a sacred repast and a gladiatorial combat. The Episcopal palace of Kansas City (actually a ten-room McKinley Administration house) was far from cheerful. There was more stained glass than one wants in a home. The downstairs rooms were too lofty for small talk and the halls too narrow for comfort. The bedrooms were like old-fashioned Pullman cars, all green and hard. It was really a terrible place to live.

So Samuel Heather left Kansas City to begin his life as a child of the century which he expected would blossom at Harvard. But he found that a terrible place to live too, and managed to get himself expelled for what used to be called a "prank," though blowing up a section of the Charles River bank is prankishness with a modern flavor.

Before leaving Harvard, Samuel visits the home of one of his roommates, and it is clear, in this passage on the boy's corpulent mother, that Heather didn't leave his descriptive powers back in Kansas City:

> My stay at the house in February had prepared me for the shock uninitiated people sometimes experience on first catching sight of Mrs. Bartoldi. In the morning, before corsets had closed in on her, she looked like something come out to eat hay. Later in the day she changed shape. A monumental bust appeared from which her figure descended in a more or less sheer precipice of unimaginable geologic complexity. One guessed at folded sedimentary deposits laced with igneous intrusions of elastic and whalebone or whatever these women use to keep themselves together. One reached bottom in a heaped up scree of thighs, knees, and ankles from which protruded two quite well-shaped feet. For a shrewd observer of the human scene, one glimpse of Mrs. Bartoldi was enough to explain a lot about the character of her son.

Heather leaves Harvard, enlists, finds himself in Korea, and after a battle on his very first day is captured. When he is finally released, his natural inclination to do the unexpected leads him to accept the Red Chinese offer to go there and study. What takes place when the news of this "un-American" act descends in its full horror on Kansas City and its Episcopal bishop is both funny and humane, and is followed by news of his choice of a Communist wife and his subsequent decision to leave China,

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come home, and to go to work for what else?—the CIA.

Eventually Heather leaves the CIA and becomes a best-selling author of mystery stories with a hero named Dalton Smed. Perhaps it is only natural that having failed at Episcopalianism, Harvard, the United States Army and even communism, he should succeed at spying and making up stories. To Samuel it's all of a piece; he had experienced the emptiness of the Right Way and the Good Life, but found pleasure and even monetary reward by doing just what people didn't want him to do—a true child of the century.

John Greenya

Kauffmann, *from page 26*

sion to churches.

I thought of something else, too. In the "interlude" scenes we get behind-the-camera shots of hip New Yorkers, those involved in making the film, sitting around Marjoe laughing wisely at his reminiscences. They seemed a good deal more silly and superficial, more anti-human, than Marjoe's ecstasists. I don't see the moral grandeur that automatically attaches to any pot-smoking Village type as against someone in Texas trying to find reason and relief in his life through "testimony." (And this is an atheist speaking.)

Slow down, Woody Allen. He's writing too fast, and writing is the one thing he's really good at. His picture this month (or so it seems) is *Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Sex*, etc., which he wrote, directed and plays in, a set of seven skits based on questions form the best seller. A couple of the skits are very tired—a medieval chastity belt bit and an Antonioni parody. A horror-film takeoff, in which a blimp-sized breast escapes from a haunted house and terrorizes the countryside, verges on the funny; a transvestite sketch does not. A TV quiz show called *What's My Perversion?* echoes a show in a Terry Southern novel, which was called *What's My Disease?* A sketch about a doctor falling for a sheep is ludicrous, not funny (although the moment in which Gene Wilder, the doctor, hears first that a patient of his loves a sheep demonstrates why Wilder is a skilled performer and Allen is not). The only moderately amusing sketch is the last one, inside a man's body as he copulates—something like those old plays for schoolchildren explaining biology, with chromosomes as characters. Tony Randall heads the brain crew, and Allen is a sperm, lining up with other sperms for ejaculation. (His best performance in the picture.) But even this skit is marred, as are most, by tasteless jokes, by smashing points instead of sharpening them, by suggesting nothing and hammering all; and by direction that simply doesn't know what the camera should be looking at, for how long, from what distance. It all comes out a casserole of amateurish filming, third-rate burlesque, and frat-house moral anarchy. I hope that it will be at least a year before the next Allen film; that he'll really work on the script, let someone else direct, and play only a sperm or a worm.

Recommended: the article by Clayton Riley, a black critic, on current black films, in *The New York Times*, August 13th. An overdue act of revulsion.

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